RED COATS AND BLUE

HARRIETTE R. CAMPBELL

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RED COATS
and BLUE

Books by
HARRIETTE R. CAMPBELL

RED COATS AND BLUE
THE LITTLE GREAT LADY
PATSY'S BROTHER
THE MYSTERY OF SAINT'S ISLAND
THE NEW CURIOSITY SHOP

The Horses Drew the Heavy Coach Past a Low Thatched Farm-house

RED COATS AND BLUE

A Story of a British Girl in the American Revolution

by

Harriette R. Campbell

With Illustrations by Marguerite DeAngeli

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RED COATS *and* BLUE

CHAPTER I

The Fugitive

It was primrose time in England and a boy and girl rode slowly among the golden shadows of Lulworth Park. They had not been riding slowly all the way, for the sides of the girl's black mare were wet and shining and she wore a necklace of foam, while the boy's cob sneezed and puffed from his exertions.

The lad jumped down and loosened the girths of his mount, while his companion, gathering up her velvet skirts, slipped to the ground without waiting for his hand. She flung the reins over her arm and stooped to pick the primroses that grew in clusters at her feet.

As they moved on, gathering the flowers, the boy said, suddenly:

"I shall never forget Lulworth, Gretta."

"Oh yes, you will!" the girl laughed. "You've been here only three days."

"But they have been grand—these three days!" His voice sounded wistful. "And 'tis different from Boston. Being at Eton so long, I've almost forgotten home."

"I don't see why you have to go home," she demurred. "Why not stay and join a regiment, as all gentlemen in England do? My grandmamma says that there is no better introduction to society than to belong to the Guards! She says it is a pity for you to go back to the Colonies. She says you are too ——" The girl paused.

"Too what?" he lifted his dark head to question her.

"I will not tell you that." Gretta tossed back her curled hair, and the plumes in her riding hat waved over her shoulder.

"Tell me," he teased.

"I'll tell you, if you will stay," she answered, perversely.

His face became grave. "I cannot do that.

There's trouble at home, and that is more reason for me to be there. You don't understand. No one does. I love England—but I could never live here."

"I think that is foolish," Gretta reproved him, loftily. "I am sure the Colonies are horrible—rough and savage. They are behaving shockingly. My grandpapa says so. So does Lord Sandwich who came to stay with us last winter. Not that I care for him," she added, "but I would not live where the people are so uncouth, and scarce a yard of damask or a length of lace to be had, and not a proper coachmaker or haberdasher or even a wine merchant in the whole of the place!" Gretta was repeating what she had heard, and her mincing voice betrayed her.

Her companion reddened, and spoke hotly: "'Tis the freedom and the courage and the hopefulness of it we love," he claimed, and he, too, was repeating, perhaps, for his voice rang with a conviction beyond his years. "'Tis all in the making and—and"—he hesitated—"if ye'd read what those write who

have been into the wilderness, where there's land for all, and rivers three times the size of the Thames, all unexplored, and lakes big as seas, and mountains high as Alps, all waiting for a white man to find them. Didst never hear of a man named Boone?"

Gretta tossed her head. "I've heard of a man named Drake, and Raleigh and Wolfe and a few others," she answered.

As they walked slowly along, forgetting the primroses, as those who quarrel will forget beautiful things, they came upon a hollow in the wood which seemed to bar their way. On all sides the trees grew thickly, but a path, steep and stony, led downward between gorse bushes and rhododendrons and the stiff branches of thorns.

"We have come the wrong way, Amory," Gretta reproached him, "all because you would argue. Now we shall have to go back, or lead the horses through this maze. I've never been here before."

"Let me go first." Amory led his cob for-

ward. "I'll take him down and come back for you, Gretta."

But Gretta replied, with some petulance: "That will take twice as long. I can manage if Stella will but keep her patience. Steady, lass, you'll tread on my skirt. Oh dear! why do girls have to wear such yards and yards of skirts, Amory? 'Tis well enough in a drawing-room, but out-of-doors I would be kilted like a Highlander."

With this revolutionary observation Gretta prepared to follow Amory down the steep path, which wound in and out, until it reached the bottom of the cuplike dell. There, to all appearance, it ended.

"But it *must* lead somewhere!" cried Gretta, impatiently. "What is that!"

She had been exploring among the undergrowth and had stumbled over what seemed to be a stone well for receiving rain water. Amory, coming to her side, examined it curiously.

"A strange place for a well!" he commented. "Let's tether our horses and explore

a little, Gretta." And this they did, penetrating deeper into the tangle of bushes and tall trees, until Gretta's outstretched hand touched the cold surface of a stone wall.

"I've never seen this before!" she cried. "Look, Amory, 'tis a little building! I wonder. Phœbe always said there was a secret passage from the house that led to some place in the park. Do let's find the door."

They crept around the small structure until they found, concealed by more bushes, a passage which led down to a doorway. Light filtered softly on to the threshold and more light came from an opening in the roof above, so that in a moment they could see the whole interior of the little building.

It contained a fireplace, a wooden bed, a table and chair, a pot or so for cooking, a few bits of crockery, but these details did not fix the attention of the two intruders, for, seated on the chair, his arms flung over the table and his head lying on them, was a man. He wore riding boots and cloak, his plumed hat lay on the floor at his feet, and the remains of a

meal stood on the table beside him. He was fast asleep.

Gretta looked at Amory, and Amory looked at Gretta, but they did not speak, and before they could move the man awoke suddenly. His hand flew to his belt as he jumped to his feet.

Seeing that he had to deal with nothing more alarming than a pair of youngsters, he smiled most charmingly and bowed to them. He was a man of thirty or more, bronzed and blue-eyed, and he had the bearing of a soldier.

"This is indeed a delightful surprise," he said. "I had not notified my friends of my being in residence, and expected no callers!" He laughed, picked up his hat, threw it into the air, and added, "In short, my young friends, I'm in hiding; but that does not prevent my making you as welcome as circumstances permit. I'm glad to see you—jolly glad, as the wags say. Vastly glad, as would say a lady of fashion. Come in. The lady shall have the chair, you, young sir, the couch, and

I"—he suited his action to his words—"the table! Now tell me, have you seen any redcoats about, and where?"

"We did," cried Gretta, "this side of Chelmsford. They were looking for some one, I think."

"Myself!" he bowed again. "At your service. I don't look important, I know, but I am! I have the honor to have incurred the enmity of no less a person than His Gracious Majesty King George the Third of Britain"—he picked up a half-emptied mug of cider and finished it, as a toast—"but His Majesty has a short memory, and my object is to give him an opportunity to forget."

Amory, fascinated, watched the stranger, but Gretta asked questions.

"Oh, what did you do?" she cried. "We won't tell. Truly we won't."

"Heigh-ho! Quarreled over a game of cards at Almack's. That started it"—he paused a moment—"as much as anything ever is started, for I think, my friends, that

in the Book of Psalms it says, 'And in thy books were all my members' (and no doubt my doings, too) 'written; which day by day were fashioned, while as yet there were none of them'! According to that it must have begun quite a long time before that night at Almack's, and I was not to blame!"

He had cut a slice of bread, added some cheese, and poured out a mug full of cider from a stone jug for Amory, and they ate, being hungry. They liked the graceful fugitive. Amory was telling him about his home in Boston, his journey to England and his three years at Eton, when the sound of a "Hallo!" startled them all.

The stranger listened, alert and still. Again the sound came: "Hallo! Mistress Gretta! Master Amory, sir, hallo! Hallo!"

"'Tis only the groom," Gretta spoke softly. "We'll go. He's looking for us, for we parted from the others and my grandmother is no doubt anxious. Good-by. Can we help you?"

"By silence, if it please you." He kissed her hand.

"Oh, we won't tell anyone, ever!" promised Gretta with enthusiasm; but she ran back to say in a whisper, "Do come again some day."

CHAPTER II

A Rout at Lulworth Hall

GRETTA CAMERON was the daughter of Captain Neil Cameron of the 42nd Highlanders, and Lady Geraldine Vane, whose parents were the Earl and Countess of Eastlake of Lulworth Hall. Because her father was away at the wars and her mother dead, she lived with her grandparents in the huge rambling house which had once been a monastery and lent itself awkwardly to the requirements of a charming and frivolous age.

It was a strange life she led, lonely, yet crowded with persons who could not be companions to a girl of fourteen, and the arrival of Amory Lathrop, her distant cousin from the American Colonies, had been an event of great importance. He was three years older than she, could ride like an Indian, was dark

and tall, wore his London clothes well, and had the manners of the gallant youths who made the Eton of that time a school of the social graces.

When he went away the summer days at Lulworth, fair as they were, passed slowly for Gretta. A circus came to Chelmsford and provided amusement for three days. Once the house was invaded by a throng of gentlemen and ladies, come from the racing at Epsom, and talking of nothing but horses and the wagers they had won and lost. Once Gretta was thrown from her horse and enjoyed the importance of being an invalid for two days. There were lessons, too, from her governess or the vicar, and Lady Eastlake sent down a professor to teach her how to play the harpsichord. But on the whole it was a long and tedious summer.

Gretta went sometimes to the little house in the dell, hoping for a return of the mysterious stranger, but he never came, and soon it seemed she must have dreamed the incident.

With the autumn Lord Eastlake returned to Lulworth, for the hunting season was beginning. This meant livelier times for Gretta, and late in October letters came from her father, bringing great news. He was coming from Ireland on long leave later in the winter, for he had been detailed for service in the Colonies and needed time to arrange his affairs before leaving on a voyage regarded in 1775 as being far more perilous than any battle.

Gretta was growing up and it is to be feared that she was more than a match for the timid ladies who came and went as governesses at Lulworth Hall. She was neglected and spoiled by turns, learning to demand her rights, and some things not her rights, arrogantly, in the great house, where maids and men worked when they must, played when they might, and went in terror of their master's displeasure.

This was the state of affairs when Captain Cameron rang the bell at the gate-

keeper's lodge on a January night of mist and murk.

The summons brought out a stocky porter, carrying a lantern and peering suspiciously at the cloaked figure, his suspicion changing to agitated pleasure as the light fell on the rider's face.

"'Tis the Captain's self," cried the man, "come from the wars! Welcome to Lulworth, sir. We never looked to see you home again safe and whole. The little mistress will be all in a flutter, that she will! Welcome home, sir, welcome home!"

Captain Cameron took the fellow's hand. "Tell me the news, Tenby," he begged. "How is she, and why do you show a light so late? Is there a rout at the Hall? Does milady make merry with her friends? What is the occasion, for I cannot flatter myself it is for me you burn the midnight taper!"

"'Tis naught but politics, sir," Tenby replied, with a disapproving air. "Milord has taken to opening his house to any Tom, Dick, or Harry that votes his way. There is talk of

The Summons Brought Out a Stocky Porter

an election soon, so there's punch and negus for many a queer bird, and folk making themselves free in the Hall as would little grace the scullery, to my mind."

"You're a good soul, Tenby. Thanks!" The Captain clapped him on the shoulder and shivered. "A bowl of negus won't look amiss to me, whatever the company," he laughed. "What a night! I've ridden since daybreak." He called a cheerful good-night and moved on up the driveway toward Lulworth Hall.

Here and there a thin line of yellow light shone through a crack between the great shutters and heavy curtains of the windows, and as the rider neared the doorway a muffled strain of music reached him from within. There was merriment in progress and cheer awaited a tired traveler, but a thought even more compelling than that flushed his cheek and lighted his eye as he dismounted and set a hand to the great bell.

The doors of the Hall were flung open before its peal had died away, and beyond

the ranks of powdered and liveried footmen the man saw a brilliantly lighted hall filled with the color and movement of women's gowns and men's gayly coated figures. Music and voices and ringing laughter greeted him.

"Send a groom for my horse. Stop," he directed. "I'll have old Turnberry himself and no other!"

The same quality in the Captain's voice which endeared him to the kilted Highlanders of his regiment must have inspired in the servant a will to carry out his wishes, for almost as soon as the horse had been led into the stable yard an old man limped across the cobbles and admitted him to the warm, odorous precincts of a well-filled stable. Horses were everywhere, tied two in a stall, some half-harnessed. Sleepy stableboys got up from the straw as they entered.

"Fifty coaches in the yard," complained Turnberry, "and nowhere to put the horses —not half of them—and the valets making the house their own, twice as at home as the grandest of the gentlefolk, and these lads

silly with sleep. It's all they think of, besides their food. Times is changing, Yer Honor, sir. When I was a lad we earned our keep, let me tell ye. But I'm glad ye've come—I am indeed. 'Tis time."

Turnberry said all this in the broad dialect of Essex, as flat and strange to those unaccustomed ears as to it were the low-lying fields and marsh-bordered rivers among which it thrived.

"You'll be all right now, won't you, old fellow!" The Captain patted his horse's shoulder and turned away with a breath of excitement.

He walked swiftly down a wide passage hung with trophies of sport—foxes' masks, stags' heads and antlers, weapons no longer in use. At its end a heavy door admitted him to a hall and he was suddenly in the midst of light and laughter, protected only from sight by a row of marble colonnades. He paused a moment to watch the scene.

Great sconces were filled with waxen candles in such numbers that the glowing light

reached every corner of the great apartment. In spite of its brilliance it was a light that warmed and caressed all it touched, seeming to reveal each beauty and soften each defect in the faces of the women and play lovingly on the rose and green, blue, purple, scarlet, and silver of their brocade gowns. Fans waved and jewels flashed, lovely heads, dressed with curled wigs, were lifted with the dainty dignity of the time, while the men, with their satin coats, embroidered waistcoats, and smart perukes, paid court to the radiant creatures who took such pains to charm them. It was a game they played, in the splendid surroundings of the ancient hall, and the flames from the logs piled on the huge hearth sent a dancing redness into the mild candlelight just as now and again a hearty, untamed voice broke into the formal stateliness of the scene. For the Captain saw that among the ladies and gentlemen who might have been at a drawing-room at St. James's Palace were those of another world—a stout man in a

suit of stiff mohair; a lawyer, so marked by his toilet of brown cloth and his formal wig; a young man severely clad in black, the appointments of wrist and neck showing him to lack the habit of much company. Yes, it was as the servants said, politics had changed manners at Lulworth Hall since pretty Lady Geraldine left it to wed her Highland soldier.

As the newcomer hesitated on the brink of the pool of gayety, a circle was formed around a person of weather-stained visage who had been addressing a group of ladies and gentlemen near the fire.

"Hark to this," cried one of the ladies, shrilly. "Didst ever hear such tales? I protest 'tis enough to make one shun bed o' nights for fear of evil dreams!" She shuddered prettily, and glanced over her fan to see if the bit of dramatics had been successful in attracting attention to herself.

"'Tis outrageous that we should be compelled to fight such wretches!" exclaimed another dame, not to be outdone. "Tell us the tale again, sir, for the public should know

the truth. There are those in Parliament, aye, and at Court, too, 'tis said, who would hide it."

"The tale! the tale!" cried several voices together.

The man, thus urged, turned to his newly acquired hearers.

"'Twas at Lexington—a little hamlet scarce larger than South Weald—and there on the green there gathered such a rabble as 'twould make ye die of laughter to see—brown coats, black coats, no coats at all, firelocks of a length such as ye'd suppose would fit 'em to be used for scaling-ladders. 'Disperse,' says the officer, loath to kill the wretches; but in their dullness of wit they would not understand that, and ye'd have split your sides to see them run, the guns tripping them up at every step and redcoats shooing them off like so many silly sheep ——"

But here the discourse was interrupted. The tinkling laughter of the ladies subsided as the young man in black spoke out: "Did they run, indeed? And who ran from the

bridge the selfsame day? I've been told *those* gentry wore red. And what about those same firelocks at Bunker Hill? Does any one of ye know how many men we lost before His Majesty's picked troops won the redoubt from a handful of farmers that never saw war till six months ago? Does anyone know how many hills there are on the American continent and that our brothers over there will defend each one of them till there's not a redcoat left to face the last farmer with his flintlock? 'Tis well to laugh—since if we do not laugh we must cry—but ye'd not laugh at the weapon that had killed yer best friend, and I'll not laugh, for I knew a brave man that died on Bunker Hill!"

"Well spoken!" It was the Captain who came forward into the candlelight, forgetting his muddy coat as he took the young man by the hand. "I'm going out to fight the farmers myself, and I don't expect to find them funny. They're brave men, for I've heard so from those that know."

"Aye, and but for fools and favorites

they'd be with us and not against us," spoke up a fiery little man in a wig whose queue stood out aggressively. "Have ye heard Burke speak, my lad, or Fox or Chatham?"

"Why," cried a lady, "'tis Neil—Neil Cameron! Fie! fie! Is this the way to greet friends after such an absence? Come and salute me, my dear. For I'm glad to see ye safe home again, nor did we look for ye so soon, nor in this weather. It has been a winter such as was never seen before, nor will be seen again, I trust."

The young man bent over the hand of his wife's mother, and Lady Eastlake beamed upon him delightfully. She was a pretty creature, diminutive within her stiff brocades, and as sparkling as her many brilliant jewels.

"But—what is this?" She touched the travel-stained cloak. "Come, come, we must make you presentable. You shall have a suit of Tony's, and then you must join us. Harry, will you pull a bell? Thank you."

"I would wish to see my daughter first of all," begged the young man.

"But of course!" agreed the lady, swiftly. She addressed the footman. "Take Captain Cameron to Miss Gretta," she ordered, "and then attend to his toilet. He must have one of his lordship's suits and the necessary linen. Bowers will look after you, Neil."

The servant murmured something, bowing profoundly, and, with an uneasy glance at her ladyship's back, turned and made for a door which led to another passage giving on a great staircase. Here he removed from its bracket a low-burning lamp, and by its light Captain Cameron followed him upstairs and along passages which, it seemed, would never end, up another flight of stairs to a doorway at which the servant paused.

"This is Mistress Gretta's room, sir," said the man.

"You may go, then," answered the Captain. "Stay. I have no light." He took the lamp from the man's hand and opened the door.

The room was cold, and at the same time musty and damp. A great black beam crossed

it above the Captain's head. There were no curtains at the tiny window, where the light was reflected in the bottle-glass panes. A tent bed hung with linen draperies stood in the middle of the room.

The father hesitated, his hand on the bed curtains. He had looked forward so long to this moment, and now it had come, as he had hardly believed it would. Slowly and gently, so that he should not disturb the sleeper, he drew the curtain aside, throwing the light on to the bed.

He saw a waxen doll, dressed like a lady of fashion, who stared up at him disdainfully from the tumbled bedclothes.

Captain Cameron pushed away the covers in a panic. The doll rolled over with the counterpane, but no girl was there. "Gretta," called the Captain, in unreasonable panic, "where are you?"

He dashed from the room, and as he did so a sound arrested him. There was a grating noise, a curse, a howl of pain, and then the thump, thump of some one falling down the

polished stairs. The Captain's light revealed a discomposed and disheveled Bowers seated in dazed discomfort on the lowest step. The Captain followed him, took him by the collar, and shook him to his feet.

"Where is Mistress Gretta, fellow?" he demanded. "Speak! You knew she was not there. Tell me or I'll shake the life out of you!" In fact, this would have been easy, for there was very little breath left to shake out of poor Bowers. He managed to stammer: "I —I—feared to t-take the liberty, sir. Oh, sir, my back, sir. Oh! Oh!"

The Captain gave him a moment to recover, while the poor fellow tenderly rubbed his bruised person.

"Now then, where is Mistress Gretta?" demanded her father, in a voice which commanded respect.

"She—she might"—he paused, too terrified to continue, but the Captain's hand on his shoulder gave him strength to say, with a gasp, "in the kitchen, sir."

"Take me there," was the order.

It was a long journey from the attic, in which was Gretta's bedroom, to the stone-floored kitchen where the great ovens were and logs burned on hearths built for roasting whole oxen, where the copper pans were big enough for baths and the pestles and mortars required a strong arm for handling. Here in the light of rush torches a gathering of grooms and menservants drew near to the warmth of the open hearth, and here, indeed, was Gretta.

She stood, a brilliant figure, clad in white brocade, on a trestle table of new oak. Her dark hair, elaborately curled, and tied with rose-colored bows, was tossed back behind her lifted head. Her little feet, in shoes of satin, were set wide apart, her arms akimbo, and she was speaking:

"And oi vow, me lud, we varmers will have none o' their vanzies. Who is it feeds the nation? We varmers! Who is it stands atween the quality and the common rabble?

She Stood, Clad in White Brocade, on a Trestle Table

We varmers! Who is the backbone of the country? We varmers! And now what reward do they give us? Bleed us—that's wot they do! Taking taxes off the American Colonies wot's cobblin' the streets with gold and put 'em on to us, they do." The girl thumped her small fists together and her audience roared with delight. "Down with the Colonies!" she shouted. "Down with the Government! Down with Fox and Chatham! Long live the King!" She raised an enormous pewter mug to her lips, and in her excitement spilled some of the contents on her gown.

"It be varmer Greenbody to the life!" gasped a gaping youth who stood near. "It be himself."

"Who'd have thought the little lady would have got all they long words right off like that?" some one else commented.

At that moment, while the bewildered Captain still watched, dazed with amazement, a diversion occurred.

A dark-haired, gray-eyed woman in a quilted and striped gown parted the crowd of men and darted, with a speed which defeated any effort to stop her, to the table where Gretta stood enjoying her triumph. She threw a strong arm around her and swept her from the table to the floor, the ruffles of her sleeves hiding the head and neck of the girl.

But Gretta fought.

"Jeanie, what are you doing?" she cried. "I'll not have it! I am doing no harm."

Jeanie turned savagely on the crowd of men who knew well enough that little Mistress Gretta had no business to be where she was, providing amusement for grooms and lackeys.

"Ye'll be sorry for yerselves when the young Captain comes home to his ain," she finished, "and that will be soon, they tell me —this very nicht, maybe. He'll not be long awa' now, and I think he'll take his bairn frae this house, for 'tis an evil place, for all it's sae grand! The little lady is not mine,

but I'm Heeland born and I will not see such things done and no raise a finger to stop it. Mistress Gretta, my dear, will ye let Jeanie tak ye to your bed?"

"Why should I?" exclaimed the indignant girl. "I'll not be treated like a child. I'm fourteen—almost old enough to be betrothed. You *sha'n't* maltreat me so, Jeanie! You're naught but her ladyship's lacewoman. Is it not dull enough for me, since grandmamma will not suffer me to attend assemblies and there is no one my own age to amuse me? It was well enough when Amory was here. Besides, my bedroom's cold and lonely and I've nowhere else to go." The child was near to tears.

"Ye dinna understand, my bairn," cried Jeanie. "Yer faither wouldna like it. He'd be 'shamed. 'Tis na fitting."

"You talk like the Duchess," cried Gretta, wickedly, and then, mimicking some lady of stiff manners, she lisped. "In my day, my dear Lady Eastlake, such a thing was ab-so-lutely

—unheard of, I *do assure* you. It simp-plee did not occur!"

Evidently the great lady in question was well known, for more laughter followed this sally, and Jeanie's cheeks showed a brighter red.

"Blackguards!" she flashed at the unruly crowd. "Hae ye no wits? The bairn canna be blamed. 'Tis those who should care for her and do na! I wish the Captain would come, I do."

At that there was a stir and a whisper which ran through the crowd, as an eddy of wind sends a ruffled path over a pond. The Captain had heard enough.

"Gretta, do you know me?" He had shouldered his way to her side.

Her father! The hero who had been to the wars and sailed the seas and braved great dangers. He who had sent her the gown she wore, and a gay parrot from the East, and shoes from France, and a complete four-poster bed in miniature, and a hundred things besides! Here, in a stained traveling-cloak,

with muddy boots and rumpled linen, but with the face she had dreamed of, and love in his eyes, here was her father. She flung her arms around him. "Oh, father, I thought you would never come!" she cried.

CHAPTER III

The Captain Has His Way

LADY EASTLAKE was amazed.

"'Tis a scandal!" she was saying, tapping the toe of her green satin slipper against the sheepskin rug. "You may depend upon it, my dear Neil, my women shall suffer for this. 'Tis past belief the laziness and love of pleasure among the servant class in these days!" She tried to assume an expression of deep concern, made a failure of it, patted the ribbons of her morning cap, and sent a glance of approval over the new chimneypiece which had lately been installed with other improvements at Lulworth by the great John Flaxman.

"But of course," she added, "you are not in earnest about taking Gretta with you to Scotland. The child is young, and the roads

at this season nearly impassable. Besides, the danger from highwaymen! And without servants, or a suitable traveling-coach! Dear Neil, you young men are so headlong, so impetuous! I cannot see my dead daughter's child exposed to such risk. You should consider a mother's sensibilities!" Lady Eastlake contrived to be pathetic and pretty at the same time without shedding enough tears to disturb her complexion.

Neil Cameron, dressed this morning in a suit of ruby-red cloth, his linen, borrowed from his father-in-law, fine and becomingly ruffled, sat opposite Lady Eastlake on a rather stiff chair of carved mahogany, and felt as uncomfortable as he looked.

"I am sorry to be obliged to differ from your ladyship," he said, "but I feel that Gretta will be more suitably placed in my brother's house, where there are children of her own age. And, with your ladyship's kind permission, I should wish to borrow the maid Jeanie until I can find some one for Gretta at home. Jeanie is willing to accompany us,

and a post chaise and postilion will be all we need ask of Lord Eastlake. I shall be able to return the horses in three days' time, as I can replace them at Hatfield or Waltham."

A little scream of horror stopped him. "Jeanie? My dear boy, what are you saying? Do you know that I allow no one else to handle my laces? Positively no one! Would you have me appear unsuitably dressed at the Queen's Drawing Room next month? Neil, be reasonable, I beseech you!"

Her distress this time was so genuine that but for an unexpected ally it might have gone badly with the Captain. At this point the door opened to admit no less a person than the Earl of Eastlake, Viscount Fullermore, Holder of the Royal Stirrup, etc. His appearance did justice to the splendor of his titles. He was a gentleman of his time, splendidly dressed in broadcloth, fine silk stockings, and lace ruffles, with stately manners and a humorous eye. He greeted his lady before he turned to Neil to learn the subject of the discussion.

"Come, my dear, the lad's right," he said,

persuasively. "You have not the leisure to fill the place of mother and companion in one. I admit it seems impossible that you are over twenty, but the fact remains that you should not expect to combine the cares of youth with those of advanced maturity. The lad is right, my dear, and you with your unselfish zeal for the welfare of all but yourself, you will give the child up and assist me in speeding them on their way."

Neil, thinking that Lady Eastlake would take offense at such obvious flattery, looked at the floor, but he need not have been so discreet. However, her ladyship did not immediately yield.

"But consider!" she protested. "However respectable and worthy Neil's brother and his lady may be, they never leave the Highlands, unless it is now and then to take the waters for madam's health; they never go abroad; they never—consider this I beg of you, dear my lord—they never appear at Court! Can we permit our granddaughter to grow up without learning the graces of

polite society? When the time comes for her to marry, what would be her prospects? Why, at the age of twelve I knew perfectly that I must fit myself to please my future husband, and I well remember that my mamma had me once a week in the withdrawing-room to make my curtsy and answer such questions as the company might ask. I made them laugh sometimes. Once a lady asked me if I meant to marry a duke, and I said no. She asked me why and I said, 'Because they bump into things when they walk,' and that delighted them vastly, for they knew the Duke of Bramshire had but just left the castle and that he was more than common unsteady in his cups. Then they asked me whom I did mean to marry, so I tried to think of somebody very grand, and said, 'The beadle,' and at that they laughed more than ever; but my mamma said, 'Highty tighty!' and was greatly put about!" Her ladyship laughed gayly at the memory, and her lord laughed with her, while they both forgot the Captain and his problems.

"And did I resemble the beadle sufficiently or did you change your mind, my lady?" inquired his lordship.

"Well, now I think of it, your lordship does assume a pompous manner at times!" Lady Eastlake teased him.

Captain Cameron despaired once more of settling this matter, and was about to speak, when a rap on the door announced the respectful entrance of a servant bearing letters on a salver, and behind him came Gretta herself. She danced in on the heels of the stately footman and sought her father's side.

"Oh, do come out!" she besought him. "You haven't seen the horses or dogs, nor the foxhounds, nor anything. There are spaniels and greyhounds and ——"

Lady Eastlake interrupted. "Gretta," she cried in a pained voice, "your frock—what is the matter with it? And there is a hole in your stocking!"

Gretta glanced down at her ankles, displayed more fully than her grandmother considered fitting.

"It's very comfortable"; she gave a rebellious kick. "It was tight, but it is not now. I sewed some pieces into it." She lifted her arm and revealed two eccentric patches of green-and-red-striped calamanco which had been inserted to widen the garment.

"Go and have yourself dressed suitably, at once!" commanded the distracted lady. "What are the women thinking of? The mantuamaker from London was here only the other day and had orders to measure you for everything you required. I examined patterns myself. This is disgraceful!" the poor lady fumed.

"But all the new frocks are so stiff," Gretta complained. "I put one on last night and I could hardly move. In truth, grandmother, I feared I should never breathe again. I had to try all the time to see if I could. I counted the bones. There were twenty in all."

Here Lord Eastlake made a tactful diversion.

"The news is grave," he said, glancing up from his letter. "I like it amazing little."

Captain Cameron turned to him.

"What now?"

"Quebec is safe, it appears; but Boston? I cannot tell. Burgoyne has landed at Plymouth, I hear, and will bring news."

But while he was reading his letter, Lady Eastlake had opened her own packet and forgotten Gretta, patches and all!

"Hark to this," she cried. "The Duchess of Kingston is to be tried in February. My dear, we must not miss it. And Lady Derby is being painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds. She has already bespoke Mr. Romney to paint her for the Academy. And listen. Is it not ridiculous? The young Duke of Hamilton travels in Italy with a retinue fit for a king, powdered footmen in crimson livery and silver lace, and strings of blooded horses which he values far too highly to ride. We must go to London, dear my lord. Say we may go at once. I have not played a game of loo for months, it seems. And Lady Susan tells me

she has a new laceman whom she wants me to see before he becomes the rage. And there is a French actor—marvelous—better than Garrick, Clive, and all the others in one. Oh! and, my dear, what do you think? Young Lord Carstairs, who shot Bremore in a duel last spring all over Lizzie Hamilton, you remember, and the king was so indignant? They say he has gone on the road as an outlaw and stopped Lord Ballantyne's coach the other day! Only figure it!"

"So they did not catch him, after all," remarked Lord Eastlake, taking a pinch of snuff."

"Catch him?" Her ladyship raised her eyebrows.

"Didst not know that he was in hiding here for three days in your ladyship's grotto in the dell?" chuckled his lordship. "Your pretty fancy was mighty convenient, my dear. Well, well, the lovely duchess is his friend and, now that her daughter is well and safely married, she is in high favor at Court and may be able to obtain his pardon."

Gretta moved nearer to her grandfather.

"Oh!" she cried, and then checked herself, for her grandmother's eye was upon her and she was not sure that she would approve of the adventure in the dell. "What does it mean—to 'go on the road'?" she asked.

"It means he has become a gentleman highwayman," explained Lady Eastlake. "They are an unlucky family. His father was banished for supporting the Stuarts. But in truth, my lord, we must go to Berkeley Square."

Gretta would have liked to hear more of her highwayman, but she did not dare to ask and the discussion soon diverted her mind.

"I think that settles it, does it not, in regard to Gretta? Will she not be better in the Highlands than in the fogs of town?" Lord Eastlake asked.

Her ladyship wavered.

"And I suppose that means I must part with Jeanie," she demurred. "Well, in London one might hear of a woman, and the

child needs attention. . . . Gretta, I am surprised at you!" This reproof came tardily as Lady Eastlake winced at another sight of the patches. "If we start tomorrow, my lord, we may be in time for Lady Derby's rout, though, to be sure, what I shall wear to it I cannot conceive!"

Gretta in the meantime cast a questioning glance at her father.

"Would you like to come to Scotland with me, Gretta?" he asked.

Now Gretta had never been farther afield than the town of Cambridge, which was, to be sure, a magnificent city with imposing buildings in which gentlemen learned Latin and Greek and other mysteries, so her grandfather had told her. Market day had been in full swing, and the street gay with booths from which one might buy ribbons and laces and sweetmeats, as well as fat pigs and great cheeses, but her day had been spoiled by seeing a young bull led toward a space encircled by spectators who awaited the bull-baiting.

She had not forgotten a moment of that eventful day, and long afterward the stories she acted for herself were based on its happenings.

But Scotland! Here was adventure indeed, for was she not accustomed to hearing North Britain referred to as a wild and barbarous country, lately infected with rebels and outlaws? Were not travelers exposed to the attacks of highwaymen and other dangers, and had she not heard a hundred terrifying tales of hairbreadth escapes from murder, robbery, frost and hurricane, flood and witchcraft, anyone of which might be her own lot on such a journey? Yet her father sat there with a perfectly calm appearance and asked her if she would like to go with him to Scotland! Her feelings kept her dumb.

"The child is frightened, of course," Lady Eastlake explained Gretta's silence. "But, Gretta dear, we will send two postilions, and they shall have good fowling pieces, and

your father is a soldier; though as for me, the mere sight of a highwayman would send me into a faint I am sure unless it were some one I knew, like Jimmy Carstairs."

"Are you frightened, Gretta?" asked Captain Cameron, doubtfully.

Gretta was speechless from a new cause. When she managed to find her voice she cried: "Afraid? Why, father, I don't know what you mean!"

The Captain laughed and threw an arm around her waist. "That settles it. You are a soldier's daughter! It only remains to ask Jeanie and borrow the packing-cases and chaise and horses from our kind host, and off we go. . . . The sooner the better, my lord" —he turned gravely to Lord Eastlake—"for my regiment may be ordered abroad at any moment."

"Can't you take me to America, too, father?" Gretta asked, her eyes on his face. She was thinking of Amory.

He laughed and stroked her shining hair.

"That, I fear, is a thing I dare not do, although I am a soldier," he answered.

The Captain was a modest man and underestimated his own courage, or so the event seemed to prove.

CHAPTER IV

The Lovely Duchess

All the domestic machinery of Lulworth Hall seemed to be involved in preparing for that journey. Grooms, carpenters, and blacksmiths plied their arts. There were baking and brewing in kitchen and still-room. Packing-cases littered the travelers' apartments and Lady Eastlake's maids were driven hither and thither by that energetic lady in the effort to equip Gretta suitably for three weeks on the open road.

At length all was ready and the clerk of the weather smiled upon the adventure. The fogs, blizzards, and high winds which had followed one another in rapid succession were replaced by mild and spring-like breezes, so that Gretta, clad in a stuff traveling-frock and capuchin, equipped with a muff and

rugs of fur, was altogether too warm, and was so handicapped by her many wraps that she nearly fell over the wheels of the chaise.

Jeanie was already perched behind, just above the luggage, and one postilion was mounted, while the other stood at the horses' heads. Lord and Lady Eastlake on the steps at Lulworth, waved a farewell, and servants crowded behind them. Lulworth would be strangely dull without young Mistress Gretta and her unaccountable ways. One never knew where she would appear next—in the still-room, perhaps, where the cakes were being baked, or, just as probably, in the black-smith's shop, or sitting on the cobbler's bench, making holes in her small fingers by trying to wield his heavy tools, or talking to Jimmy, the old hedger, who was responsible for the stoutest cut-and-laid hedges in the county. There were few places where she was not seen. Even the spinning-room would miss her, though she never came there to work, but to ask questions which the maids were often at a loss to answer, and to tell stories

gleaned no one knew where. She was not allowed to read novels, of course, not even *The Vicar of Wakefield* or Mrs. Brooke's excellent works, but she knew many ballads and poems and could sing like a lark.

Yes, they would miss her, and the radiant young face framed by the great hood of her cloak seemed dim to many because there were tears in their own eyes.

"Good-by, darling, darling grandmother!" she called. "Good-by, grandfather! Good-by, Turnberry. Don't let anybody ride Stella till I come back. Good-by 'Lizbeth. Little Richard can have my battledore and shuttlecock and my parachute and cup and ball. Good-by! Good-by!"

The horses were showing their eagerness to be off. At a sign from the Captain, the postilion left their heads, leaping to his seat, and the chaise rattled down the drive. The Captain stood up, waved his hat; the horses plunged forward; the postilion who rode the leader soothed the excited beasts with "whoa-ings" and "hawings," incomprehensible to

any but the horses themselves. Gretta called a last farewell and, turning a corner, they were suddenly out of sight of the house and the great adventure had begun.

Gretta looked at her father. She had been a little girl when she saw him last, but now she was growing up, and she wondered if he was pleased with her. She had never cared very much what anyone thought of her before, but she realized now that she wanted to gain her father's approval and that it would not be won by a pretty frock or polite behavior, which was all that anyone expected of her at Lulworth.

They reached Watford at noon and Saint Alban's at three. They went to see the cathedral, with its square tower of Roman bricks, delightful against the blue of the sky. They saw, too, the Roman bridge over which the great martyr had walked to his death. Gretta shook her head over this.

"But he was a Papist wasn't he?" she demanded.

"I suppose so," the Captain replied.

"What *is* a Papist, father?" Gretta demanded, confidentially. "It isn't as bad as being a 'Monseer' is it? Or is it the same thing?"

Her father laughed at that. "'Monseer' is a Frenchman, and many of them are Papists."

"Are they very, very wicked?" asked Gretta, solemnly.

"Well, we think they are wrong, naturally," answered the soldier.

"But, father"—Gretta was rather shocked at this moderation—"grandfather fought the French. He said so. He wouldn't have done that if they had not been *very* wicked."

The Captain looked thoughtfully at the quiet stream running over the pebbles at their feet, then he looked into the trusting eyes of his daughter.

"The trouble is," he answered her, "things start easily, but it is not easy to stop them. The old war started because the French king gave away land which belonged to us. The

French had to stand by their king, even if he was wrong, you see."

"Oh!" Gretta felt bewildered and upset. "And what is this war about, and why did it start?"

The Captain shook his head. "'Tis rebellion," he answered, "and we have to put it down. But if you listen to Fox and Burke and Chatham you'd think the Colonists are right and His Majesty's Ministers in the wrong. And there's one sure thing: there are greedy merchants and traders on both sides who profit."

"But, father," cried Gretta, bewildered and more alarmed by such an attack on her prejudices than she had ever been by the prospect of their dangerous journey, "the Continental army is all butchers and savages and niggers. They scalp people and wear war paint instead of clothes. Phœbe's brother is a soldier and she told me."

"What about your cousins in Boston? Are they savages or niggers?"

Gretta thought of Amory with his proud

head and tall, straight figure. "But they are loyalists!" she triumphantly exclaimed.

"So they are. But many of the same sort are not, Gretta. Why, George Washington himself, I've met him. He's a gentleman and a fox-hunter!"

Gretta had lived in a hunting county long enough to know what this meant!

Her father may have seen the trouble in her eyes, for he took her by the arm and turned her back to the Angel Inn, where they supped on pork pie and sausages and slept early.

There were other shocks in store for Gretta, for everything she had been taught at Lulworth seemed to be wrong, even her riding, which her father sampled the next day on their way to Newport Pagnell. At first she chattered freely and her father listened without comment.

She talked of grooms and scullions, of duchesses and Ministers of the Crown. She knew that the Queen was ugly and the King was vain, and that the Court was ruled by the

Queen's old governess, which annoyed the ladies-in-waiting. "Why, Lady Susan says 'tis not worth the fatigue of standing for hours at a time, as a lady-in-waiting must do!" Gretta prattled. "The Queen isn't allowed to give away so much as a fan or a shoe buckle!"

And the next moment she would be talking of old Peggy, Jimmy the hedger's wife. "She had twenty-two children, but ten died," she told him, cheerfully, "and they've always lived in that cottage by the pond. Peggy likes it because it is only a step to draw water, and she's bad with the ague now and shakes so that you'd think it was the shivering ghost at Lulworth to hear her. I went to her cottage to get a drink one day and I was amazing sick afterward and had to be bled. Jeanie said it wasn't for the quality to drink pond water. They've got a well in the village, but it's got frogs in it and it smells. Once everybody was sick there, and grandmother wouldn't even drive through the village or let me. It made me feel frightened. Once I

saw a cart covered up going down to the marsh, and Phœbe said they were taking away the corpses. She cried, because her sister lives in the village. Grandfather had an apothecary from London come down, but he was angry because the man told him he'd better pull down the whole street if he wanted the people to be well. Imagine, father! Good brick cottages! Was he not insane?"

"Right, I expect," the Captain muttered. "No wonder there is sedition brewing!"

She had missed no chance of listening to the gossip of gay folk who came down from London to stay at Lulworth. Thus she could tell her father stories of such clubs as Almack's and Boodles, of racing at Newmarket and Epsom, of the Pump Room at Bath, of routs and marionette shows, of Mr. Garrick and his rivals.

"You will find the life at Stavor Castle quite different from Lulworth," Captain Cameron remarked.

"How different?" asked Gretta.

"They think very little of pleasure and very much of their duty there," the Captain replied.

"Duty?" Gretta cocked her head on one side. "Does that mean lessons?"

"Perhaps."

Gretta considered.

"The vicar used to teach me the Catechism and some Latin and the rule of three," she told him. "At least he tried to," she added, with candor.

On this day the weather changed, and when they reached the inn at Market Harborough, Gretta's velvet habit was white with snow. To their chagrin, they found that a great lady, traveling in state with outriders and postilions, had taken all the best horses. She had been a very particular lady, it seemed. The Camerons had to wait all the next day, and when they did set out one of the horses went lame just as snow began to fall. Instead of getting on to Leicester that day, they had to put up at a small wayside inn where Gretta and Jeanie shared a bed in a

windowless attic with nothing between them and the thatch. This would not have worried Gretta but for the rats and other vermin which occupied the picturesque roofing, so close to her that she could touch it with her fingers. The thought of being snowed in in this sinister place frightened her, and, though Jeanie did not say so, she knew that Jeanie was frightened, too. The Captain slept at their door that night. He had heard muffled sounds from the inn parlor which did not please him, and once he had heard a raised voice speak the name of the lady who was traveling before them along the great road to Leicester.

There had been a thaw in the night, but now it was snowing again in great soft flakes that menaced a blizzard. The Captain decided to press on, so they set out with as much haste as possible, glad to leave the dirty inn, the smiling landlord and his frightened wife, behind them. But everything was gloomy that day. They had not gone far before, at a crossroads, they saw a tall wooden structure

with something ragged and rattling hanging from the top. Gretta knew what it was and turned away her head. The snow drifted down, the horses loped dejectedly onward, Jeanie shivered under a plaid which served her as a rug, cloak, sleeping-blanket, and curtain, the postilions took turns at the reins, and only Captain Cameron retained a cheerful calm.

Gretta's fingers were cold. So were her feet. The snow thickened. She did not know how the drivers could see. The road was so bad she was sure they must have lost their way, but when she told her father this he pointed to marks still visible in the snow, where the coach of the traveling lady had gone before them. Gretta began to be quite curious about this lady. And when, presently, the tracks of her coach vanished altogether, she felt lonely and frightened and more than ever aware of discomfort.

She had not been very comfortable at Lulworth. Her room had been cold and damp, her food coarse and badly served, her clothes

too thin or too heavy for the season, and she had been expected to bathe in a round tub sometimes, except in midwinter. But at Lulworth she did not have to submit to discomfort if it became severe. If her room was too cold she made a servant carry great logs and pile them on her hearth. If the chimney smoked too badly, as it usually did, she took herself and her bedclothes to Phœbe's room and climbed into bed with her, a fact which would have shocked Lady Eastlake into a swoon. If she did not like her food, she rifled the still-room, the jam cupboard, and the larder. She had her own way of rectifying deficiencies in her wardrobe, as we have seen, and as for her bath, why, she could always splash the water about without getting in.

Therefore, finding herself uncomfortable, more tired, hungry, and cold than she had ever been before, it was natural that she should employ the methods which had never failed her. She began by complaining to Jeanie, who shivered under her plaid in the back of the chaise.

"I'll walk a bit to warm myself," the Captain said, "and you, Jeanie, come in front with Mistress Gretta and she can go under your plaid."

This change accomplished, Gretta continued:

"I'm hungry."

The remainder of their provisions was under the seat and Gretta proceeded to help herself; but the Captain interfered. "Not too much of that pie, my dear," he directed. "I must save some in case we are really lost, as you suggest." He laughed, but Gretta cast an alarmed glance at his face. She did not want to be lost. She would not mind on a fine warm day, with plenty to eat and drink and a horse to ride and some excitement about it. But now in the cold, in this dull white world, soft, yet menacing, with tired horses and cross servants and hardly anything to eat, being lost was not an attractive idea. Besides, she had chilblains in her feet and Phœbe had told her that sometimes chilblains became

poisonous and you died of them! Gretta began to cry.

The Captain, walking beside the chaise, heard her sob.

"What is the matter?" he asked.

"I'm cold!" sobbed Gretta, "and hungry! It's wretched, being lost. I wish I hadn't come."

Silence.

"I wish we'd stayed in Northampton. I think everything is d-d-dreadful!" continued Gretta.

Now the Captain had a temper of his own. He shouted: "Turn the chaise. We are going back!"

Gretta sat up in alarm. "But it is too far to go back!" she cried.

" 'Tis too far to take you to Argyllshire!" the Captain asserted, bluntly.

"But, father," Gretta protested, "of course I'm going to Argyllshire! You can't go back."

"Can't I, indeed!" the Captain replied. The horses had been turned and the chaise,

lurching alarmingly, swung around after them.

Gretta flew into a passion.

"You shall not behave so!" she raged. "I will not turn back. You are a villain or you would not use a lady so. I'll have your eyes for this!"

"Talking like a kitchen wench will not help you," her father grimly told her, while Jeanie vainly tried to quell the storm. But Gretta's rage, unchecked in so many similar scenes, waxed furious until she was flinging herself about the chaise in a perfect tantrum of temper, held by the frightened Jeanie from casting herself out into the snow.

It was then that her father matched her methods with remedies to suit, for he mounted the wheel and, taking her by the shoulders, shook her until she begged him to stop. When he had finished she sank back into her corner, silent and amazed.

At last she said, "Please, father, I'm sorry."

The chaise came to a standstill and her

father was beside her in a trice. In spite of the snow, the reconciliation was a happy moment.

"You see, Gretta, my dear, I don't want you to be the kind of woman a man must always leave at home," he said.

"Oh, father, what do you mean?" she cried.

"Just that. Some ladies have too little of the woman in them to be deprived for a moment of their fans and jewels and powder and patches. Others—even finer ladies, I think—can put all these things away and share the adventures that a man likes to remember at the end of his life. Not in a man's way, perhaps, but in their own. I want you to be this kind of a lady and that is why I brought you with me."

"Oh, father, I didn't mean it! I'm sorry; indeed, indeed I am! Tell me how to be your kind of a lady."

He put his arm around her and drew her close to him.

"Do a kindness when no one is likely to

hear of it; hold your head all the higher when it is about to droop; smile when everyone else is frowning; pretend to be calm when you are nearest to panic; share what you have when other people are grabbing at it. That's my kind of a lady—or gentleman, either. Do you understand?"

"Yes," answered Gretta in a subdued voice, "I do, father. Father, if I remember—if I never behave like that again—will you let me come?"

He kissed her wet cheek and, turning the heads of the tired horses, they drove on, but not far, for a surprise awaited them. Just before the short winter day began to fail they came upon a coach at a standstill, the horses drooping with fatigue and the servants busily repairing a wheel. The party looked up with suspicion as the Cameron party drew near, but, reassured by the respectable appearance of the cortège, they touched their hats to the Captain, who jumped down and went to the window of the coach. Gretta saw him doff his hat, bowing profoundly over a

lady's gloved hand extended to him from the window of the coach. This must be the mysterious lady who commanded so much attention from innkeepers and hostlers. In a moment her father came for her and lifted her down, took her to the coach, which was splendid without and luxurious within. The lady took her by the hands and drew her inside, placing her on blue silk cushions and giving her a soft fur wrap to replace the cloak and hood which were wet with snow in spite of the cover of the chaise.

The lady was the most beautiful person in the world. Her pretty coloring, her dark hair and gray-blue eyes, were only part of her charm. It was the placid space between the eyes, the regular line of nose and curving of the lip, which gave her the especial loveliness that made her, although no longer young, the most beautiful woman in London.

She was kind and gentle, too, and insisted that Gretta should travel with her as soon as the wheel of her coach was mended. It seemed that she had known Gretta's mother,

and she smiled with pleasure in recognizing Captain Cameron as the young subaltern with whom she had danced many years ago.

"I shall be glad of your company and protection," she told Captain Cameron, "for this stage of the journey is always dangerous and I have only my servants with me. Indeed, I have been regretting my decision to come to this country in this season." As she spoke, a footman came to the door of the coach to announce that all was ready to proceed, and the journey was resumed. Night began to fall as they entered the city of Leicester, and they found the influence of their friend as useful as it had been inconvenient when she preceded them, for supper, rooms, fresh horses, and every attention from landlords and servants were theirs at a quiet word from her. The Bluebell Inn could not do enough for them.

"Father, who is she?" Gretta asked when they were alone, all the cares and terrors of the day forgotten in the glow of the inn fire and the comfort of an abundant meal.

"She is the Duchess of Hamilton and Argyll," the Captain answered. "She was the reigning toast when I was younger and she is still beautiful. She has asked us to take tea with her in her sitting-room. She saw Governor Tryon when he was here last year and knows General Burgoyne, and she has first-hand information about the war which I shall be glad to hear."

Gretta tried to remember where she had heard that name before.

That evening Gretta listened to a conversation for once without interruption, for when she grew tired of politics and battles she could look at the lovely Duchess. Afterward she remembered bits of that talk.

"As late as last June, Governor Tryon writes, Congress was so uncertain of which side it meant to take that it gave an official welcome to Mr. Washington in the morning and to him in the afternoon."

Speaking of the battle of Bunker Hill, the Duchess said:

"Some say we should have attacked by sea,

since the rebels were divided from the mainland by Charlestown Neck and could not have retreated had we covered that with the batteries of our ships of war. I do not know. It is a terrible drain on our strength, this war in the Colonies, but we must pursue it to the end. How can they be so wicked?"

"Perhaps they think they are right," suggested the Captain.

The Duchess lost none of her gentleness in her suddenly-assumed dignity.

"It cannot be right to defy the King," she stated, quietly.

The Captain flushed. "I am going to America to die for that principle if I must," he replied, equally quietly.

"Forgive me," she smiled, "but I am overwarm on this theme. The Colonies owe us everything—protection under which they have thrived and acquired wealth—everything. When they protested against the tax on legal documents, what did we do? Repealed the law. Again, they resented the tax on tea. Again we removed it ——"

"Not quite, I think?"

"I know my facts, dear sir. While English people paid a ninepenny tax on tea without a murmur, the Colonials were excused the ninepenny tax and only asked a beggarly threepence—a mere matter of principle."

"Perhaps it was the principle they resented, not parting with the money."

The Duchess was gentler than ever as she said: "Yes? And then why in Massachusetts, when they were asked to propose any alternative they chose to the tax on legal documents, why, if their intentions were so good, did they refuse to come even so far to meet us? No, it is sheer rebellion, like that of naughty children who resent all authority, however venerable. But they are not children. They say that Mr. Washington is a gentleman."

"He is."

"You have seen him?"

"I have. I was on leave, and went to Virginia for some hunting. He gave me as good a sporting day as I ever had. His wine is

good, his household delightful, his manners perfect. He was then, to all appearances, as loyal a subject of the King as even you could wish, madam. There seemed to be but one thing that rankled with him—the injustice with which the Colonial officers were treated in the late war. Often, it seems, they were placed in subordination to our regular officers, though these were of inferior rank and experience. Their pay, too, was inadequate. He evidently nourished a grievance, but on the other hand he talked as loyally as anyone about the uprisings in New England and the unscrupulousness of traders. He seemed heartily set on living his own life and keeping out of politics."

"I cannot understand it."

"After all, madam, they are of our own race. Would we care to have laws made for us by men who had never set foot on our shores? Would we like to be told by strangers that we must not buy from one country, nor sell to another? Would we like to be forbidden to manufacture for our own needs or

to write a will without helping to pay for a war going on on the opposite side of the world, a war with which we had no concern?"

"Then, sir, what part do the Colonies play in the life of a nation? Why shed our life blood to redeem the wilderness if the wilderness owes nothing to its deliverers?"

"The Colonies are our children, I would rather say—and children leave home."

"But help to support their parents."

"But, madam, that is what I hope. That these unhappy problems may be solved and our children be our friends once more."

"We both wish that" the duchess graciously smiled, "and I forget that while I can but argue, you go to fight for the cause. I wish you Godspeed. In the meantime it must be good-night, for little Gretta here is already half asleep. We will travel together tomorrow I hope?"

CHAPTER V

Mr. Jimmy

THE Duchess was on her way to visit the Duchess of Newcastle at Clumber in Nottingham, and she persuaded the Captain to break their journey there.

"They will be delighted to receive you both," she assured them, "and we will find means of sending a postboy ahead to insure you good service as far as Carlisle. Do not refuse me. It will add greatly to my security to have you in my party, since we pass through Sherwood Forest."

This was enough to recommend the change of plan to Gretta, and they were glad to adopt it. Clumber House, the Duchess told them, had been burned down and rebuilt recently by the famous architect, Stephen Wright. Many valuable paintings had been

lost, as well as books and furniture, but the new house was more spacious and cheerful than the old, and better to live in.

"Is the Forest very big?" asked Gretta.

"It is nearly all destroyed," sighed the Duchess, "but there is an oak here and there which may have sheltered Robin Hood and Maid Marian. You will see those. It is still very wild in parts, and," she smiled, "there are still highwaymen."

They traveled slowly, for the fall of snow had made the roads treacherous and the coach wheels sank into holes from which they were extricated with difficulty. They had to cross the River Soar by a flooded ford. But the Duchess told Gretta stories of Court life, of her travels, of the exciting night when the mob tried to storm her house in Argyll Buildings because she would not show a light in honor of Wilkes, and the day passed quickly.

"We shall have to make shift to pass the night at the next inn we reach," the Captain told the Duchess. "The horses are tired and more snow will fall before morning. I

do not care to travel by night over this road in a snowstorm with ladies under my protection."

"It shall be as you decide," the Duchess conceded, "although my servants are armed and know the way well."

They were crossing a wild and marshy plain, from which emerged clumps of trees and dense shrubbery. The road seemed to go on endlessly through this morass, and the postilions were obliged to drive with infinite care, for, whenever the fabric of the ancient roadway failed, the horses floundered in a sea of mud. Snow clung to the tops of the trees and shrubs, but had melted on the watery ground. The desolation was profound.

The light was fading with a rhythmic movement. A few moments ago everything had been gray and black; now the same things were blue and mauve; soon they would all merge in the deepening dusk. The wooded knoll beyond the narrow bridge stood out against a stretch of marshy water which caught what brightness remained in the sky.

Just as they drove on to the bridge, where there was only room enough to pass with care, a cloaked rider emerged from the wooded knoll, blocking the way. The postilions drew their horses to a halt, and for a moment all was confusion, for the way was blocked by the carriage and the servants in the rear could not pass. The coachman drew his flintlock. "Make way for her grace, fellow," he shouted, "or you shall be blown to a thousand bits."

A clear laugh was the reply. Gretta, who had poked an inquisitive head out at a lowered window, saw the rider as well as the dusk would permit and gave an exclamation of surprise. She knew that cheerful bronzed face, the soldierly lips and eyes of sailor blue. The lovely mare he rode was marked with a broad white band, like a necklace, around her throat.

"How do you know that yon wood is not full of my followers, sirrah?" he trifled. "But come, we are keeping the lady waiting and that is not my wish. Ah ——?"

Captain Cameron had leaped down from the chaise and now came forward on foot to the end of the bridge. He pushed his pistol back into its case.

"You have some communication to make to her grace?" he asked, courteously.

The stranger's face reddened slightly as he bowed.

"I have. I hope that the Duchess will be advised by me. A lane runs through the farm you are about to reach. It will join another lane about two miles east of Nottingham Road. If you follow these two lanes and rejoin the main road at the Gay Peacock Inn you will avoid trouble. That is all I am at liberty to say."

"But, sir," the Captain objected, "we do not know you. How can we be sure that it is to our benefit to follow your advice?"

It was the Duchess herself who replied to this.

"It is Jimmy"—she spoke from the window—"Jimmy Car—" She was about to say

the name, but was interrupted by the stranger, who put a finger to his lips.

"Please, not that," he begged her. "Your servant, madam." He bowed deeply. waving the plume of his hat almost in the mud of the road. "You will trust me?"

"Of course. But, Jimmy, where are you going? Why must there be this mystery?"

He laughed again. "Politics, dear madam. All politics. I find this better than semi-starvation at Crompton in the shadow of His Majesty's disapproval, or something worse. And now we must part, greatly as I regret it. Sir, I salute you. Mademoiselle, madam, permit me." He rode adroitly to the side of the coach, kissing the Duchess's extended hand, reined back his horse, wheeled, waving his plumed hat, and galloped swiftly away and out of sight without recognizing Gretta.

"Drive on," the Duchess directed the postilion, "and do as that gentleman said."

When he had gone the Duchess leaned back, her face grave and troubled.

"Headlong, reckless, generous, and wild,"

she said. "No worse. We were friends when he was a little lad and I but a girl. He gave me a romantic devotion as lads will, and quarreled with one who spoke ill of me."

"I thought it was a quarrel over cards," Gretta put in, forgetting her promise. The Duchess, startled, asked her how she knew, and Gretta, knowing this to be Mr. Jimmy's friend, told her.

"Yes, 'tis his loyalty to say that. They made cards the excuse. 'Twas for me. Poor Jimmy! They told me in London that he had become a gentleman of the road, but I did not believe them! Foolish—more than foolish! This must be the farm of which he spoke."

The horses drew the heavy coach with difficulty up a road little better than a track, which led past a low thatched farmhouse. Children playing at the door stopped in amazement, and ran to get their mother to see the great folk. The farmer's wife came out curtsying to the Duchess, who ordered the coachman to draw up, while she ex-

plained that they understood the roadway to be impassable and were advised to drive through the farm. The woman, smiling broadly under her big cap, curtsied again. The Duchess tossed some coins to the children and they went on.

It was nearly dark when they reached the main road, and they could only just make out the sign of the Gay Peacock. There were lights in the windows and the place looked as cheerful as its name to the travelers, for snowflakes were beginning to fall again.

Gretta was very tired as she climbed out of the coach, thinking gratefully of supper and bed, but she could not help wondering what had become of the mysterious rider.

The host was waiting at the door of the inn, all attention to their wants. "I was told that your grace might be passing," he informed them. "You will find us prepared with such as we can provide. 'Homely but plenty' is our motto, your grace. Pray to step this way."

At supper the Duchess seemed anxious and

preoccupied. She said to the Captain in a low voice: "I am uneasy about Jimmy. He warned me, and if there were outlaws waiting to rob the coach they would revenge themselves on him."

"But you believe him to be an outlaw himself? Is it not unlikely that he was warning you against his own followers?"

"Do not thieves turn against thieves?" asked the Duchess. "Besides, I shall never believe that Jimmy is a common robber! It is said that he patrols the highways and exacts tribute for giving information to travelers."

"That might be dangerous," the Captain agreed.

There was a moon that night, which shone on the strip of road below Gretta's window. When she went to bed she dreamed, and perhaps because of this she wakened with a start to hear the galloping hooves of a horse slush-slushing not far away. Without thinking she ran to the window, and there in the moonlight she saw plainly the horse with the white

necklace, galloping wildly, the reins trailing, no rider in the saddle on her back.

"Jeanie," she cried, "wake up!"

Poor Jeanie, stiff and weary, started out of a sound sleep with a cry. "Is it a fire? Dinna forgit yer mither's pearls," for Jeanie took her responsibilities seriously even when she was half asleep.

"No, no, but we must find father. I'm sure something dreadful has happened to Mr. Jimmy."

Late as it seemed to the sleepers, the Captain had not yet retired, and Jeanie found him in the inn parlor, exchanging jokes and reminiscences with the landlord, who was an old soldier. He came at Gretta's call. The landlord, who had followed him upstairs, heard what she said.

"I'll send a couple of lads out to look," he said, promptly. "There's been rough work on the road lately. A coach was robbed not a fortnight since, and the servants handled rough, not two miles from this spot. I'll look to it."

"I will go, too," the Captain decided.

"Oh, father, let me," pleaded Gretta; but he shook his head.

There was no more sleep for Gretta. Wrapped in blankets, she sat by the window and watched. The Duchess, who had heard the movement and voices, joined her, and they watched together, while the patch of moonlight slipped smoothly along the road, striking a little farther into the darkness as the night passed. The Duchess told stories of Mr. Jimmy when he was a boy—of his valor and truthfulness, of his kindness and cleverness with birds and beasts. "I would not have him hurt," the Duchess sighed.

At last what they awaited came—first a twinkling light, then voices and the tramp of feet. They had galloped forth, but they were walking back, and the Captain held on the horse before him the figure of a man, swaying and lurching in the saddle. He was lifted down and laid on a mattress on the parlor floor.

"We found him beside the road. He would

have bled to death. I've tied up his shoulder, but he'll want care."

The landlady and the Duchess were tearing up linen for bandages, while the men undressed the wounded man and examined his injuries. He had been shot through the shoulder, but the wound was clean and superficial. The worst harm had been done by some sort of a blow. His hair was matted with blood. When this was washed away and the cuts dressed, the Captain said: "He'll be all right. But it's lucky Gretta saw the mare. Well, Gretta, you've saved a life tonight."

Gretta looked down at the man whose life she had saved and found that his blue eyes were open and that he was looking at her, a smile in them.

"A poor life to have saved, Mistress Gretta, but at your service for good or ill," whispered Mr. Jimmy.

CHAPTER VI

Gretta's Fortune Is Told

MR. JIMMY never explained what had happened to him on that moonlit road, but he did not contradict the Duchess when she guessed that he had been attacked in revenge because he had warned her of the ambush awaiting her coach.

On the second day after this episode the little party set out for Clumber, the wounded man propped with cushions by the Duchess's side. It was a tedious and painful journey for Mr. Jimmy, but he bore it with gallantry and tried to hide his suffering.

Clumber House, reached at last, seemed to open comfortable arms to the travelers, and its master and mistress accepted their unexpected guests as quite normal occurrences. It had a pleasant face, Gretta thought. She

liked the long lake with its swans, she liked the peacock on the terrace and the great hound that marched majestically to the doorway in dignified greeting. Within the house, avenues of marble pillars led around a great hallway, and between these Gretta saw a wide staircase, also of marble, parting halfway, the two parts turning again to meet a gallery above. Bedrooms opened on to this gallery—so many bedrooms that Gretta felt sure she would have been lost had not her own door borne a card with her name written on it.

The comfort of a blazing fire was here, and a great bed, warmed with a bed-warmer and hung with curtains of the very latest fashion from France, and a plump little maid in a huge cap to help Jeanie unpack, and ewers of steaming hot water, and a hot drink and a whole roast chicken, with pastry and ham and other substantial viands invitingly laid on a table by the fire. All these were so agreeable after the long, cold journey that Gretta felt sorry she could not keep awake long enough to appreciate them. It was morn-

ing, it seemed, almost before she had slipped into her nightshift and seen Jeanie snuff out the bedside candle.

Morning brought new discoveries, for there was much to be seen in the old park. The Duchess of Newcastle insisted on their remaining a second night, and their own Duchess seconded the edict, while Mr. Jimmy reinforced their commands by a plea of his own.

"You can't desert me so soon, Mistress Gretta," he declared. "He who saves life assumes a vast responsibility. You must regard me now as your special charge. What shall I do with the life you have preserved?"

He was lying on a sofa in the red drawing-room, looking out on the lake and the bare trees beyond. A melancholy light hung over the water, and sounds of wind and the call of an unseen pheasant in the bracken were harsh and sad.

"Why don't you go home?" Gretta proposed, practically.

Mr. Jimmy shook his head. "The roof is

falling in and the windows leak and my father is in France."

"Then"—Gretta had a brilliant idea—"go to the provinces and fight the rebels, like father."

The Duchess glanced up from her tapestry.

"An idea, Jimmy," she smiled. "Perhaps you'll win the royal pardon that way. Who knows?"

Just then Captain Cameron, going out to shoot a brace of pheasants, called Gretta to accompany him.

Early the next day, rested and cheered, the travelers resumed their journey, leaving the Duchess and Mr. Jimmy with as much regret as if they had been old friends.

"Don't forget, Mistress Gretta," Mr. Jimmy said in farewell, "whenever you want a life to throw away, there's mine."

Gretta laughed; then she grew sober. "I shall make father take me to the Colonies, too," she declared; "and you will come, Mr. Jimmy, and we'll whip the rebels, and live

in Virginia and hunt foxes and shoot pheasants and have black servants, and ride and swim and be happy. And the Duchess will come to visit us. Father, say you will take me!"

But the Captain only smiled and shook his head as the postilion cracked his whip and the chaise began to move.

The journey became more hazardous as they traveled northward. They encountered wild weather, with flurries of snow and sleet. There were fewer travelers; even encounters with pack-horse trains and postriders became exciting, and the halt at a turnstile, with the gossip of the road to be had there, seemed a great event.

They reached Manchester on a Saturday after a long and uncomfortable drive. The town was gay, for it was market day, and the booths with their varied wares attracted Jeanie and Gretta. It was too late to travel farther that day, so the pair wandered from stall to stall, looking at the pots and pans, the chapbooks and wooden dolls, the brooms and

homespuns and magic cure-alls, there displayed.

While they lingered in the market Gretta was accosted by a gypsy woman who begged to read her fortune, but Jeanie motioned the woman away. "Braggarts an' a' they be," she scorned them, "claimin' the second sight when a' the world weel kens that none but the Heeland-born hae that."

"But I should like vastly to have my fortune told," Gretta protested. "Why will you not let me, Jeanie? It would be diverting. Oh, Jeanie, please!" But the Scotch woman shook her dark head and pulled Gretta away. Gretta's eyes flashed. Her father was nowhere to be seen. As Jeanie paused to look at something, Gretta slipped into the crowd and found the gypsy. Putting some silver into her hand, she asked for her fortune. The old hag bent over the fresh young palm until her wizened features nearly touched it.

"You must hasten," Gretta cautioned her, "or my maid will find me." She glanced over her shoulder as she spoke.

"Then will I tell ye these three things." The thin old voice pierced the hubbub made by folk who crowded the market. "Ere the May bloom twice in the hedgerow ye'll have seen more water than is in all the lakes and rivers of Britain rolled in one, sharper fire than parts the clouds over Helvellyn when the witches ride abroad and the night is full o' fear, and a sight so sad ye'll not forget it though ye live to see all the sadness man's life can hold. And I'll tell ye this more. There'll be three friends for ye—one ye have saved, one will save you, and t'other ye'll desert in his hour o' need, though ye'll like him best of all. And two more things I'll tell ye: trust him who brings ye back the bowknot ye've lost from your sleeve, and when ye've had such news as ye cannot live and bear ye'll know it is not true, for ye are of the favored ones and your star rides high in the heavens for many a year to come."

The old creature dropped Gretta's hand and, folding her cloak over her head, shambled away with her cry of, "Your fortune,

my pretty gentleman. Tell your fortune for a silver piece and bring ye luck."

Gretta turned away, puzzled and disappointed. " 'Water—more than all the rivers and lakes in Britain.' Why, that might be the Atlantic Ocean!" she said aloud. " 'Fire—sharper'—a battle!" She clapped her hands, " 'A thing so sad'—I don't like that. 'Three friends'—Amory? Mr. Jimmy? Who else? 'One I've saved, one will save me, and one I'll desert'—I don't believe I'd ever desert the one I liked best of all. 'The bowknot I've lost from my sleeve'—what nonsense! Wait a moment. There is a blue ribbon missing from the frock I wore at Clumber. I wonder if she means that! 'Bad news'—'fortunate one'—I hope that may be true."

She had intended to walk in the direction of the inn, but now, looking about her, she realized that she had missed her way. She tried to retrace her steps, but a crowd of rough persons, bent on merrymaking, prevented her. She was pushed here and there, and at last she found herself looking between

the shoulders of two men on to the yard behind the inn where some entertainment was in progress. It evidently delighted her rough neighbors, for there was much laughter and excited discussion. At length a farm hand, wearing a stiff holland smock, saw her and called out, noisily:

"Give place, lads; the young lady wad loike to see the fun." Cries rose—"Up—up wi' the lady," and Gretta found herself lifted shoulder high, looking down on a scene so savage that she never forgot it.

A dark, angry-looking man, dressed in the decent cloth of a tradesman, held a bloody bird in his hands, while opposite him a laughing young gentleman, his lace ruffles stained with the gore of his own fighting-cock, was boasting playfully to the spectators.

"Didn't I tell him? He was cheating. Nobody can beat this gentleman here." He tried to stroke the disheveled plumage of the furious bird and received a vicious peck for his pains, at which he laughed gleefully.

"Let 'em go," cried some one. In a mo-

ment there was a scurry of wings; feathers flew; men shouted; the gentleman's cock staggered, went under, while the mangled warrior belonging to the tradesman lifted his blinded head and gave a victorious crow. Gretta hid her eyes with her hands and heard the welcome voice of her father, who had seen her lifted above the crowd.

"No harm, Your Honor," the man who held her cringed; "the young mistress wanted to see a bit of fun."

The Captain's military bearing awed the people. There was a wavering moment before they let him carry Gretta away. When he set her down she looked up at him doubtfully. She wondered if he meant to shake her again. But instead of that he seemed as doubtful as she was. They walked in silence toward the inn.

"A soldier is no guardian for a little maid, I fear," he said, helplessly. "If you were but a boy, Gretta, 'twould be easy. But I cannot lay hand on you again."

Gretta seized his arm. "Oh, father, in-

deed, indeed I'll never be disobedient again! I've been punished enough and I'll not forget. It was dreadful to see those horrible men and the poor cocks, and the old beldame told me I'd desert my best friend in his hour of need. Indeed, indeed, I'll be good!"

He kissed her. "Then let us forget it," he said.

CHAPTER VII

On Glasgow Green

GRETTA was determined to make up to her father for the worry she had caused him, and she bore the fatigues of the next weeks without a complaint. The roads were in a terrible condition and it was more and more difficult to secure good horses as they went on; but at last the wheels of the chaise rolled on to Scotch soil and the travelers felt that they had come home.

They were within a few miles of the city of Glasgow when, at the sight of familiar plaid swinging along the road before them, the Captain called the postilion to halt. Three soldiers turned suspiciously at the Captain's hail, but they paused as he rode up, asking some questions in Gaelic. She did not understand the reply of the tallest soldier of the

At Sight of Familiar Plaid, the Captain Called the Postilion to Halt

three, but Jeanie, who had been dozing with some difficulty on the back seat of the chaise, surprised them by waking suddenly and crying, "Jamsie! Jamsie!" as she leaped from her perch, throwing her arms around him without ado. She offered not the slightest excuse for her conduct, but Jamsie himself seemed to feel the need of explanation, for he turned to the Captain and said in English, " 'Tis Jeanie, sir, ye ken."

Satisfied that all had been made plain by this statement, the pair proceeded with their lovemaking under the shelter of Jamsie's plaid.

Meanwhile one of the soldiers was speaking earnestly to the Captain, who seemed troubled by the story he told. Gretta moved to his side, touched his arm, and asked him, "What is the matter, father?"

" 'Tis a shame," he asserted, warmly. "These men supposed they were enlisting in the Forty-second Highlanders. Instead of that they were drafted into an English regiment and"—he laughed a little, still divided

between amusement and indignation—"and actually asked to wear trousers! The last insult to a Highlander who has never known any dress but the kilt! And these two cannot speak a word of English, while the officers could speak no Gaelic! A crying shame, I say. Gretta, we will lie in Glasgow tonight and I will see this matter put right before I leave the town." He spoke gravely to the men, and they listened with respect and confidence. Jeanie was torn from Jamsie, having been promised that she would see him again in Glasgow, and they all returned to the chaise. It was then that Jeanie explained herself.

"Jamsie and mesel' were plighted this lang syne," she told Gretta, "but the land was puir and his auld mither nae grand in her bones, an' wedded we couldna be. So Jamsie he went for a soldier, though his mither was sair loath, an' he's been awa' at the wars, but he's put by a pretty siller an' in six months' time he'll hae enow. He was wishing to join the Forty-second, an' that's why he

left his ain regiment, for he kenned weel there'r mair chances of promotion wheer the fightin' is, and 'tis in America the Yankees be, ye ken. An' land to be had for the soldiers when the war's ended, maybe, an' what they name a 'bounty' for enlisting. If my Jamsie gangs to fight the Yankees, maybe I'll gang mesel', fer 'twould be sair sad parting again; and Jamsie's a fine upstanding laddie an' doesna put his hand to his pocket more often than he need." Thus, unromantically, Jeanie explained her passion.

They passed through the city of Glasgow, with its great cathedral set on a hill, passed Dunbarton rock, fortified against enemies from the sea, and stopped at a mansion called Levenside, where they were welcomed warmly by their host and hostess. These kind people heard with concern the story of the three soldiers, and the laird promised to use his influence, with that of Captain Cameron, to rectify the injustice.

There were family prayers that night, before Gretta was sung to sleep by the river

which ran through the park. No more straw beds now, nor attic rooms with windowless walls. Instead the softest linen, the warmest quilted counterpane, a fire blazing on a hearth that seemed far away, and stiff thick curtains drawn over deep-set windows. Jeanie tucked her up with a pæan of praise for their native land. To be in Scotland and on the threshold of the Highlands would have been enough for her, but to have found Jamsie added joy to joy, and she poured it all out to her sleepy mistress, so that Gretta dreamed of Loch Lomond and Loch Awe, of Ben Cruachan and Ben Greet, of kilted Highlanders and black-faced Highland sheep, of oat cakes and dropped scones and knockets, until the sound of the rising bell reached her ear.

Prayers began the day, the laird reading to the assembled household from a large and ancient Bible, his voice dealing reverently with the words. But as prayers ended, a disturbance in the great hall startled Gretta. A

lad stood among them, showing the signs of hard travel.

"An ye please," he spoke, "I've news that will na bide. 'Tis the three Highlanders, an ye please Yer Honor. 'Tis taken for deserters they be, and mesel' sent post to bring the Captain, or shot they'll be for certain."

Jeanie started from her place, taking the lad by the shoulder and shaking him firmly.

" 'Tis no my Jamsie ye're clackin' o'!" she cried. "My Jamsie is no deserter and the mon who says the word is a leear, no matter though he be the King's self!"

The servants clustered around the lad while Captain Cameron questioned him closely, quieting Jeanie, who trembled by his side.

"We must go at once." He turned to the laird, but that gentleman, accustomed to decisive action, had already given orders, and horses were being saddled, while a hot breakfast was carried in for the travelers.

Jeanie seized the Captain's arm. "Ye'll save the laddie, sir, weel ye no? He never

harmed a chick, my Jamsie, an' as bold a soldier as ever handled claymore! He is no deserter—not he! 'Twas all a wicked scheme —ye've said it, sir. Ye'll no desert the laddie."

"Take us, too," pleaded Gretta. "'Tis hard to wait for news."

It was at last arranged that Jeanie and Gretta should go to the house of a lawyer in Glasgow, and Levenside sped them on their way with hopeful and confident words. The ride seemed long, but was over at last, and they reached the house where they were to wait. Poor Jeanie could not rest. She walked back and forth, to and from the window, in such distress that Gretta found it hard to bear.

"My Jamsie, sae braw and sae guid," she murmured. "Him I mind as a wee laddie, barefoot and bold, and I'd watch him and think him wonderful, though I'd no tell him that, ye ken, but toss my head and look anither wa'. 'Twas he could climb to the cormorant's nest and dared to gang where the

wild swan reared her young, though the auld bird wad be fierce to pluck at the ee's o' him. 'Twas he could trace the roedeer on the mountain and kenned weel where the salmon wad leap at the mouth o' the stream. 'Twas he that gathered me shinin' stones for a necklet, and took me under his plaidie when the mist was drivin' thick on the moor. My Jamsie, sae young and sae true. Wad it be himsel' they'd shoot through the Heeland heart o' him, till he fa's in the dust o' this wicked toon? Ah, wad we'd no left the hillside o' Ben Greet, but fed on berries and drank the waters o' Braggan Burn before this day had found us oot!"

"Oh, Jeanie, I know father will save him," Gretta repeated again and again. The big grandfather clock ticked on noisily and Jeanie looked at its face.

"If he is in time," she murmured, "he will do his best."

The house of Mr. Fergusan was not far from Glasgow Green. As the woman and girl waited in the peaceful room, sounds of shout-

ing came from the Green. They looked at each other. A woman with a plaid shawl flung over her head rushed by outside the window; she was followed by a boy, then another; then a group of girls, hastily wrapping plaids about them, ran past. Some one shouted: "'Tis the deserters. They're to be shot on the Green. Coom an' spier them ——"

Mrs. Fergusan, with white cheeks, entered the room. "Do not go, my poor soul," she besought Jeanie. "Do not." She even tried to take the plaid from her. But Jeanie was not to be stopped. She sped through the doorway, and Gretta, a sob caught in her throat, followed. They flew, side by side, guided by the shouting, past the quiet houses into a narrow street, down another, and suddenly they were on the great open space of Glasgow Green.

Here was a scene to take away the breath. Gretta had never seen such a crowd of excited men, women, and children, and the plaids draped over heads and shoulders gave

them a strange, half-animal air. The Gaelic phrases, and the English spoken in the Scotch way, were unintelligible. Gretta felt for a moment that she was alone in a den of wild beasts.

Then she saw her father, and near him were the three kilted Highlanders, surrounded by a guard of soldiers.

"Are they to be hangit the noo?" cried a lad close to her.

"Nay, nay, not till the morn," some one replied.

Jeanie was pushing and elbowing her way toward the prisoners, and Gretta following in her wake, when all at once the crowd ceased to scramble and swayed in a single direction.

"Harken, can ye no? The officer wad speak. Still yer clacken the noo."

There was something like a pause in the hubbub, and then Gretta saw that her father was mounting a rough platform improvised out of hogsheads and a plank. She could hear only a word now and then, but she saw

his face, and Jeanie, pausing before her, held her head lifted toward him till he ceased.

"What did he say? Did ye ken? Tell us, can ye no?" A murmur went up all around.

"Oh," cried Gretta, seizing Jeanie's hand, "can't some one tell us what he said? Jeanie is going to be married to Jamsie and he is the tallest soldier, and that is my father who spoke."

The temper of the crowd had changed and Jeanie was suddenly pushed forward, Gretta beside her, until she was at the center of the crowd, facing the circle where the group of soldiers stood. It had taken the people a moment to understand the Captain's statement, but now they began to cheer, and as Jeanie came forward with outstretched entreating hands, a great cry arose, so that the Captain, taking Jeanie by the shoulders, had to shout the words.

"They've been pardoned, Jeanie, and they'll be drafted to my regiment tomorrow and sail with me when I go to the wars."

It was more than enough to set the hearts

of the Glasgow men and women ablaze. They surrounded Jeanie and Jamsie and bore them off, shouting. They cheered the Captain till he had to protest. They tossed Gretta to their shoulders and carried her down the Green.

There was wild rejoicing in Glasgow that day, which waxed high as night approached. Had not three stanch Highlanders been rescued from the evil designs of the British soldiery, and was not Culloden too recent a memory to make this a matter of indifference, and did not some of them love the memory of Bonnie Prince Charlie and wish him back?

Indeed, late that night there were songs sung and toasts drunk which would not have pleased the German-English King in his Palace of St. James's had he heard them.

Charlie is my darling, my darling, my darling ——

Gretta went to sleep, a happy smile on her lips and that song ringing in her ears.

CHAPTER VIII

An Unpleasant Surprise

GRETTA could not remember her aunt and uncle, although she did remember Stavor Castle, most ancient of the three castles on the shores of Loch Foyle. It was tall and strong, built for a fortress and not for comfort. There were dungeons in it, and there was a hole into which inconvenient enemies had been cast. From its highest windows one could see great expanses of loch and moor.

The little place called Glennish, given to Gretta's father and his bride on their marriage, was more charming and equally romantic. Although it was very old, a castle in miniature, its small size and remote position had made it less liable to the attacks of enemies, and it had been built for comfort. Its rooms were round, and the sun managed to

shine in at all the windows, set in the massive walls. A stream of clear water ran under the kitchen floor, and all you had to do was to let a bucket down and pull it up again, full of sparkling, silvery liquid. There was a walled garden where grew in summer apple trees and sweet peas and cabbages, raspberries, sparrow-grass, roses, and peaches in the friendliest sort of way.

It was a perfect spot, the Captain said, but too lonely for one child, and it was to Stavor he meant to take her.

Accordingly, the last day's journey to Greenock was undertaken, and at its end they said farewell to the chaise, and Captain Cameron set out to find a trustworthy skipper with a craft for hire. They had arrived at a propitious moment. A schooner was to sail the next morning for the north and would, for a small consideration, set the travelers down at Ilvercolm, where they could easily find a conveyance to Stavor. The skipper advised them to embark that night, as the ship would sail early.

So Gretta found herself tucked into a wooden bunk, comfortably wrapped in plaids, a pillow borrowed from the inn under her head, and the sounds of the ship, unfamiliar and exciting, around her. A lantern swung gently between her bunk and Jeanie's. Her father was to sleep in the forward cabin with the Captain, who had given the best to her, for this was a ship manned by Highlanders and they would do anything for a Cameron of Stavor.

Sleep came quickly, and only when the ship, already some hours under way, began to roll heavily in the cross currents at the mouth of the Clyde, did she fully awaken, so hungry that the rather overpowering smell of bacon was as welcome as the scent of clover on a summer day. Jeanie had not thought fit to undress her, being convinced that the ship might be wrecked at any moment, so Gretta ran on to the deck, before the lurching of the vessel had time to disturb her, and found herself entering the wide waterway of Loch Foyle, great blue hillsides

on either hand, a stiff breeze blowing, and her father standing in the bows, looking before him into the heart of his Highland home.

It was a wonderful day for them both, and the old skipper seemed to know it; even the ship leaped proudly on as if aware of a mission. Just why it was so wonderful would be hard to say, but beauty is never easy to define, and beauty pure and undefiled was there—in the clear purple where the hills traced rugged lines against the sky; in the wide sweep of water, purple here, green there; in the gay diving and lifting of the gallant little craft; in the sound of the wind in the canvas and the swelling of her filled sails; above all, in the hearts of two Highlanders going home.

It was well that they had that day.

Evening brought them to Ilvercolm—a huddle of stone houses in a half-hidden bay. The wind had dropped, but a frost threatened. The Captain consulted the innkeeper, a ruddy little man, kilted in a Stewart tartan

which had nearly lost its plaid. He predicted snow before morning, and at this the Captain looked grave. The Ilvercolm inn was not a place where he cared to keep Gretta for a snowbound fortnight. He decided to press on, at least as far as Spirr Castle.

So, as darkness gathered, Gretta mounted to the seat of a very ancient chaise, the Captain bestrode a stanch white mare more notable for perseverance than for speed, and they set out along a road that wasted hours in skirting the formidable hills.

It was the worst journey they had yet endured. The cold grew more intense as the night advanced, and there were holes in the road and steep declivities beside it, and in places it was nearly swept away by the sea. Jeanie and Gretta clung together for warmth and support. Again and again they had to alight and make their way on foot across causeways or by stepping-stones, while the horses were urged over the broken, flooded roadway, the chaise rocking and rattling, more often on one wheel than on four. Be-

fore they reached Spirr, snow had begun to fall and Captain Cameron asked Gretta if she could endure it if they went on to Stavor, "For," he said, "should a heavy snow fall we might be detained for weeks and I should have to leave you there."

Gretta was cold and weary and the thought of leaping fires and a bed seemed to promise perfect bliss. For the moment nothing else seemed to be of much importance. But in the weeks with her father she had discovered that in moments like these it was best to think twice before deciding. Her second thoughts made her say, "Let us go on."

"Aye," murmured Jeanie, "for there is no luck at Spirr the noo—not since Lady Margery gang awa' and wedded the Laird o' Nell. 'Tis gloom and woe at the castle, and I wad na lie there mesel'."

So they traveled on, each mile won with difficulty from the darkness and the rocky broken coast. Always they heard the voice of the sea loch, sometimes beside them, sometimes below, sometimes receding half a mile

then creeping back toward the road as it bent for the thousandth time. At the wilder sound of a mountain stream, they redoubled their caution, for this meant a bridge or a ford, and such things might or might not be in a safe condition to use. The old postilion knew the road and its risks. No one could be sure how a day might have increased these.

It was almost morning when they passed a stone bridge of recent construction, and the chilled inmates of the chaise were told that they would soon be at the park gates. Gretta, too exhausted to be glad, tried to smile at her father. Snow ceased to fall as a gray line struck through the gloom to show that morning was on its way. She hardly believed that the night was over. But it was, for the gray light spread, a streak of bleak silver across the horizon. Her father called to her: "Look, Gretta, when we turn that corner you'll see the castle standing high up on your left."

Gretta leaned forward. They turned the bend. Her glance followed his pointing finger as a cry of amazement came from the

postilion. Her father reined his horse to a stand. Everyone looked toward the place where the Castle of Stavor should have stood against the hillside.

There was no castle to be seen.

CHAPTER IX

Westward Ho!

STAVOR CASTLE had been burned to the ground and the laird and his family were homeless. Gretta and her father found them huddled uncomfortably in one of the gardener's cottages, and Captain Cameron had not the heart to add the care of Gretta to the many problems which faced them.

Perhaps, too, on renewing his acquaintance with his Highland brother and sister-in-law, Gretta's father felt doubtful of the wisdom of installing Gretta in their midst. They regarded nearly everything about her with surprise, and, in the lady's case, disapproval. Her clothes, her manners, her elaborately dressed hair, her accomplishments and her lack of them, alarmed Mrs. Cameron, whose daughters memorized a psalm a day and ex-

celled in the working of texts in cross-stitch. They were pretty girls, and Gretta liked them for the cheerful light of mischief unsubdued in their gray eyes, but they were easily startled by mention of card games and horse-racing, and really frightened when she asked them to go fishing on Sunday.

It was Jeanie who proposed a way out of the dilemma.

"I'll be following Jamsie, mesel'," she told him. "There's others that will do the same. Why should not Mistress Gretta? Has she not cousins in the place they call Boston, and are they not gentlefolk, to judge by Mister Amory—as brave and gallant a young gentleman as I'd care to spier?"

At first Captain Cameron rejected the plan with a great show of firmness, but events conspired to persuade him. A letter came from a lady named Mrs. Bartholomew. She wished to return to her family in the Colonies, her Irish husband having died, and she was taking her sixteen-year-old son with her. Accommodation had been arranged for her on

the transport on which she heard Captain Cameron was to sail, and she wished to enlist his influence and to ask his advice in the matter of preparing for the voyage.

That a lady was to sail on the transport, which was to be commanded by his friend, Colonel Campbell of Inverneill, put a new complexion on the matter. "Why not?" he began to think.

The only person to oppose the plan was Lady Eastlake, who sent express letters, post, to Scotland to divert him from his intention, but, as she proposed no practical alternative, she only succeeded in confirming him in it.

As for Gretta, her heart sang. Here was adventure indeed. She looked at maps and tried to see in the blue and green blobs the waste of waters and the unexplored lands which she was to traverse. She would see Amory again, wearing the uniform of a British officer, no doubt. She dreamed of battles, Indians in war paint, fleets of full-rigged warships, firing on one another in a roar of flame and smoke. She took down her uncle's

flintlock from the wall, and examined it, trying to push the ramrod home. She teased her father with endless questions, and when he was not there she teased Jeanie, who answered her in such ways as, "If ye'd lend a hand with these shifts and no clacket sae much, there'd be mair hope o' gangin' when the day dawns, lassie." Jeanie was nothing if not practical. In her own equipment was a finely woven garment which she showed Gretta with pride.

"'Tis my winding-sheet," she explained, "for Jamsie and mesel' will be wedded oot theer nae doot, when he's saved the sillers."

"But you don't need a winding-sheet to be married in, do you, Jeanie?" Gretta asked.

Jeanie cast a glance of scorn at the child. "Ony weel-informed body kens that 'tis a disgrace to be wedded and to set up house with no winding-sheet laid by for decent burial. I'll be weavin' one for Jamsie onst he's my gudemon."

The summons came sooner than was expected, and in early April the three travelers

said good-by to their hosts and returned to Greenock to await the sailing of the transport. Here Gretta met Colonel Campbell of Inverneill—a fine man of determined aspect, who had reddish hair, a Roman nose, and a clear-cut chin, and made Gretta feel that all must go well under such a leader. He was not of her father's regiment, but wore the red coat and white breeches of the Royal Engineers. He knew and admired the lovely Duchess and told Gretta how good she was to her people, and how they loved her.

It was almost at the last moment that bad news came. The illness of an officer left a vacancy on one of the other transports, which Captain Cameron was asked to fill. This meant separation, for the other transport was smaller and less commodious than that commanded by Colonel Campbell, and there were no ladies on it. To transfer Gretta was out of the question. The misfortune must be endured.

So it happened that Gretta's heart was heavy as she leaned over the rail of the ship,

watching the bustle of preparation for sailing. The delays had been endless, but now all was in readiness. Sailors swarmed aloft, boats were bringing last detachments of soldiers to the side of the ship. Barges laden with stores were being unloaded and the goods stowed away. Flags flew, pipes played, the crowd on the shore thickened.

Sometimes the tears in Gretta's eyes dimmed her vision, but sometimes they fell, and it was at such a moment that a boat drew to the ship's side and a boy lifted his face to look up. One of Gretta's tears fell straight on to his upturned face. His look of bewilderment was so absurd that she could not help laughing, and as he saw her his mouth opened and he looked more absurd than ever. So they stood for a moment, the lad awkward, amazed, open mouthed, the girl laughing, tears still on her lashes, her dark curls hanging over her shoulders as she leaned toward the rocking boat.

The boy's troubles were not yet over, for, still dazed, apparently, by the encounter with

Gretta's grief, he was ordered sharply to take his turn at the ladder by which the occupants of the boat mounted to the lower deck of the ship. Instead of watching what he was doing, he looked at Gretta, and, not unnaturally, missed the rung altogether, falling awkwardly forward, making a snatch at the ladder and at the same time pushing the boat away with his groping foot. He was thus left hanging in midair, sprawling and dismayed, and the crowds on the shore and the soldiers gathered by the rail, glad of any diversion, howled their derision at the spectacle.

By the time the unfortunate youth had been rescued and had climbed to the deck, Colonel Campbell had told Gretta that he was the sixteen-year-old son of the lady who was to take charge of her on the voyage. Mrs. Bartholomew followed the youth, and both were introduced to Gretta.

To her chagrin, she found that he was not at all her idea of a gentleman. His clothes were such as would have been suitable on a lawyer's apprentice or an apothecary's son.

His jaw had a definite tendency to droop, and his manners were shy and uncouth. Only his eyes redeemed him, for these were pathetic, like a dog's, but blue as a dog's never are. In spite of this, the idea of spending three or four weeks in his constant society seemed anything but a pleasant prospect to Gretta. Servants were often quite congenial companions, but they were servants and they knew it. She had never met anyone of the middle class on equal terms before, and her curtsy was as formal and stiff as she could make it.

Before she had time to snub the youth further everyone turned at the sound of pipes to watch the detachment of Forty-second Highlanders march down to the wharf.

It was a fine sight. The dark tartan swung to and fro as the rows of bare knees moved in and out in perfect time, bonnet brooches gleamed, and red coats and white facings made a brave show. Gold lace and silver ornaments distinguished the officers, and Gretta regarded them with pride.

The pipes were playing mournfully now,

"Lochaber no more, Lochaber no more." All at once it seemed impossible to leave this dear land and sail out on to the vast waste of ocean, the bows of the ship turned toward a strange country, hostile to her own.

A boat was bobbing on the waves below them, waiting to embark a group of soldiers with their officer. As Gretta looked down, the officer looked up and smiled.

"That is Colonel Menzies," some one said.

"Come and gie a body a hand with the portmanteaux," Jeanie demanded. "I'm told 'tis well to have all tidied before ever we get to sea. I canna do it all. Coom, lassie, dinna greet. There's nae time for that."

In the fun at putting the tiny cabin straight, storing away clothes, provisions, cooking utensils, and all the paraphernalia needed in those days for an ocean voyage, Gretta forgot her sorrows.

Mrs. Bartholomew shared the cabin, and it made Gretta quite uneasy to see her son, whose name was Denis, coming and going with his mother's belongings, for he had so

slipshod a way that it made her think he might put the bacon in the clothes press and the books in the soap bucket. The last mistake he would certainly not commit, however, as Gretta soon discovered, for he loved books, and his mother laughingly refused to let him handle them, because, she said, he would do no work if he opened one. Time for reading later, she thought.

Gretta liked books, too, but, peeping into these brought by Denis and his mother, she found few pictures and many long words. Some of them were written in the Latin language which Gretta regarded with aversion. To be sure there was a volume of Shakespeare's works, and a novel and some plays by Mr. Goldsmith, whom Gretta had seen once at Lulworth. There was a French book by a person named Prévost which had plenty of conversation, but Gretta could not read French.

Clearly Denis was not altogether stupid if he could understand all these books. Gretta thought perhaps it would be well to make

friends with him, in spite of his coat and his manners.

The moment for departure drew near. The ship was full of soldiers and sailors now, with those wives and children permitted to accompany them. The shore was crowded with friends and strangers waiting to see the sailing of the fleet. Aloft all was activity. Sails were being unfurled, orders were shouted from stem to stern. The pipes were silent, but now and again a song rose and swung in the air for a while and faded again to give place to the voices of sailors and officers preparing the ship for sea.

Gretta and Denis dropped their work to see the anchor weighed. With shoutings and running feet sailors scrambling in the masts, and a roaring and thumping of the wind filling the sails; with a waving of hands and a turning shoreward of the faces of women, the ship swung softly round and, lying over on her side, glided along the river Clyde toward the sea.

As yet nothing was strange except the size

of the ship, and the soldiers lying on the deck below, watching the banks slip by, while their womenfolk made a great bustle and fuss about their preparations for housekeeping in their floating abode. Gretta had sailed down the river before; she knew these purple moors and rocks which sheltered them on either hand. There was Arran with its rocky crest, and the far point of Kintyre. This was her country still, and the strangest thing about it all was to feel so at home and to know that she had entered without chance of recall on an adventure which would carry her into scenes and dangers she could scarcely imagine now.

"When we see the banks again," she said aloud to Denis, "we shall know more than we do now, won't we?"

She did not know why she had spoken in this way to a boy who was so tall and thin and rumpled as Denis, unless it was because of the books.

"'Tis not the things that happen to you that make you know things," Denis told her;

"'tis the way you think about them." He pointed to a cottage, alone on a point of rocky land. "A man could live there all his life and learn more from watching us sail past him than we might learn from all our travels."

"Oh no!" cried Gretta, and in the dispute which followed the broken ice of self-consciousness flew right and left, shattered between them for good and all.

"By yon bonny banks and by yon bonny braes,"

sang a man's voice from the stern.

Evening, with its mystery, was falling about them. Stars shone out one by one, then in faint groups, then in diamond-like clusters. The color of the sea darkened to purple around the moving panels of yellow lamplight from the ship.

Some one in the steerage was singing and Gretta could hear the words:

"I've heard them lilting at the ewe milking,
Lasses a-lilting before dawn of day;

But now they are moaning, on ilka green loaming;
The flowers of the forest are a' wede away."

The verses went on, the woman's voice rising and falling with unspeakable sadness in the unfamiliar loneliness.

"Dool and wae for the order
Sent our lads to the Border!
The English, for once, by guile won the day;
The Flowers of the Forest, that fought aye the foremost,
The prime of our land, are cauld in the clay."

The tears were running down Gretta's cheeks now as she listened:

"We'll hear nae mair lilting at the ewe milking;
Women and bairns are heartless and wae
Sighing and moaning, on ilka green loaming;
The flowers of the forest are a' wede away."

She was crying without disguise when Jeanie found her and the welcome smell of cooking drifted up from the hatches.

CHAPTER X

A Storm at Sea

WHEN Gretta awoke next day, morning sunlight alternated with green gloom at the porthole. A fine day, a brisk breeze, and the transports well out into the sound. But what was happening to the floor? Gretta had no sooner slipped her bare feet on to it than it rose with a peculiar silky smoothness which made her feel as if three or four customary meals had been omitted altogether, and then, abruptly, slipped away, circled roughly, and came back again at a totally different angle, while she looked through her porthole into the cavern of a wave.

Jeanie was nowhere to be seen, so Gretta struggled out of her blankets and drew on such garments as she could reach. She stumbled out of the cabin into the companionway

and up a steep flight of steps on to the deck. That was better! The breeze in her face rectified matters for a moment. The ship was driving gallantly forward, heeling now and again in the wind, and Denis was extended at full length, reading a book, almost at her feet. She sank down beside him.

"Feeling sick?" he commiserated, shyly.

Of course it was the wrong thing to say.

"Certainly not!" Gretta answered, stiffly, and immediately was very sick indeed.

Denis won her confidence by ignoring the incident. He fed her on biscuits as soon as the spasm subsided, until she gradually lost her aversion to seeing the sea rise above the rail opposite and then vanish as the rail mounted high above the sky line. He talked to her about the ship and the sailors—told her about "first dog watch" and "second dog watch" and bowsprit, and mizzin masts and topsails and foresails and whales and typhoons.

That first day was the only long one for Gretta. Her father's ship came within hail-

ing distance and she could see his figure standing in the bows. This made her happy and lonely at once. But how was one to live this life for six weeks or more?

Yet quite soon the routine of the ship seemed natural. The days were hardly begun before they were over. Denis and she talked to the sailors and listened to their yarns. There were Denis's books, and Denis himself, who, she found, was as good as a book. He could read Shakespeare so that one laughed and cried, trembled with fear, or burned with indignation, held one's breath in suspense, or rejoiced in the happiness of a pair of lovers; in imagination romped with Titania and Puck, or marched into battle under the Rose of Lancaster.

If books failed, there were the animals—a whole farmyard of poultry, some pigs, a black cat who took a fancy to Gretta and brought her all the mice and rats she caught in the hold, and a canary that belonged to a wife of one of the soldiers.

Mrs. Bartholomew, who was an adept at

all sorts of needlework, taught Gretta such arts as "cross-and-change" and "braid-stitch," and Gretta started a pair of slippers for her father.

Nearly every day she saw him. Sometimes his ship was so near that they could speak, and all would have been well had the weather remained fine. This, however, was not to be. Just as the novel diversions palled, and Denis's awkwardness and ugliness had led to a quarrel in which she told him the truth about himself; just as she was beginning, secretly, to think with some regret of the comforts she had left, and with a good deal of doubt of the pleasures before her—the ship ran into a gale.

A storm at sea!

If Gretta had thought at all about the matter she would have imagined this to be a very thrilling adventure. She would have pictured herself, perhaps, lashed to a mast, spray in her face, a wind beating inspiringly upon her, great waves leaping all around her, sailors swarming in the riggings, and the

captain on the bridge shouting nautical orders in a gruff voice. And some one would ask her if she was afraid, and she would say, "I think it is glorious!"

It was not like that at all. In the first place, the storm began with days of misery, when one was never dry, never warm, never properly fed. Gretta crept about the ship, hanging on to things, and but for Denis she would have stayed in her bunk as the easiest thing to do. He made a game of everything and taught her to do the same. When the bread was sodden and salty he said he liked seasoned food, and when the hens would not lay eggs, not being in one position long enough at a time, he said a change of diet was good for everyone. When the deadlights were put on to the portholes, so that no air at all penetrated to the cabin, he said it would be a pity to cross the Atlantic without knowing what a deadlight was.

But when the storm reached its height even Denis had to confine all his energies to keeping alive and hanging on. Gretta was

sleeping when the first bad squall burst over the ship, and she cried out in alarm as water poured into the cabin from the open doorway. A light had been swinging from the beam in the ceiling, for Jeanie had not yet lain down, but this was blown out and there was complete darkness in its stead. Jeanie climbed on to the bunk to avoid the water rushing along the floor, and a lurch of the tormented vessel threw her on to Gretta. The two clung together in terror, as hurrying feet, calling voices, and the thumping of loosened furniture, boxes, and other cargo made pandemonium above their heads. They could even hear the tortured squeals of the hogs between other sounds, and Gretta wondered what had happened to the cat.

That was the beginning of three days and three nights of tempest, when they could not attempt to move from their cabin and the least venture was liable to result in a broken limb. The three women were fed on ham which the steward had cooked for them, as a precaution, when dirty weather was ex-

pected. Once Jeanie managed to get a pot of coffee from him, and for this they were thankful, but the temporary lull which made it possible was followed by so wild an onslaught of wind and wave that Gretta wept for her father, wishing they might die together, since die, she felt sure, they must.

To lie, drenched at intervals with sea water, the roar of the angry waves in one's ears, gloom by day and blackness by night, sodden food to appease hunger, every muscle strained with the effort to maintain one's balance within the quivering body of the tossed and buffeted craft, this was storm at sea. Evil odors, sickness and despair, weariness beyond endurance, fitful sleep that ended in terrified awakening, this was storm at sea.

Would it never end?

It did. When the mainmasts had been scrapped and sent overboard, when the cocks and hens had perished and the unfortunate swine had their brains dashed out against the taffrail, the wind began to abate. When water buckets had rolled back and forth over the

flooded deck, breaking a sailor's leg and killing the black cat, and had at last lurched over the side one by one, when two sailors had been injured in the fallen timber and one had been swept overboard and drowned, a patch of blue showed in a wild sky. When all the bread had been soaked and the meat more or less spoiled, when the ship had "broached to," lying on her side for a full half-moment, and had righted herself, bereft of everything that had remained to be swept overboard; when Gretta had been sent reeling to the side of the cabin, for that half-second its bottom, and back again as the vessel strained upright once more, the seas began to subside.

Gretta crept out and on to the deck at last, and looked eagerly across the still mountainous waves to find her father's ship.

The waters were a waste of emptiness; no ship was there.

"Ship?" Denis shook his head. "Maybe we'll rejoin them in a day or so."

But Colonel Campbell shook his kind

head. "'Tis no use to fret, child," he said as he walked away.

It was the skipper who blurted out the truth:

"Ship? Ye may be thankful to be above the waves and not beneath them. Ask no more than that, lassie. Do na talk to me of ships. Who can tell where they may be—blown hither and yon for sixty hours o' hurricane? Yer father's in the hands o' Providence, and so are we. Ask na mair than that, for I canna answer."

And he, too, walked away.

CHAPTER XI

Prisoners of War

IT SEEMED too good to be, but it was true! They were in sight of Boston Harbor. Song and laughter had drifted up from the steerage for the first time in weeks. Gulls had encircled the ship for nearly two days. Even earlier than that, fog from the banks had seemed friendly and kind because it meant that the shore was near.

There was no fog today and the skipper had permitted Gretta to look through his telescope, so that she had actually seen land. Now they were sailing on a fair wind nearer and nearer to it. They had already passed fishing-vessels and a schooner, and now Gretta could see, without the aid of the glasses, that they were among islands and approached a long wharf projecting from a

town of clustered houses, spires of churches rising in surprising numbers from its midst. There were ships, too, drawing near to them.

A June sun shone on a quiet sea; Gretta began to think of the pleasant poplins and muslins in her packing-cases. She doubted if her cousins would have anything so fashionable, for Lady Eastlake had been at pains to supply her with the best that could be obtained, dispatched from London by coach to Glasgow.

The long sea voyage had left her feeling in need of fresh garments and the refinements of a gentleman's house, and she was growing impatient for the landing. The skipper thought that the other transports must have arrived already, for they themselves had been delayed by the necessary repairs to the ship, and had struck a calm afterward, during which they had made little headway. The others might have escaped this and been before them. Gretta felt sure that she would find her father in Boston, and what a reunion it would be, with all their adventures

to compare! Perhaps Jeanie would tell him that the skipper had praised her for her courage in the storm.

Denis was beside her, his blue eyes on three ships which were approaching at a great speed in the favorable wind.

"What are they?" asked Gretta, curiously.

But as she spoke, from an island toward which they sailed came a flash and a roar. The sea to the left of their vessel broke into spray, and a bugle sounded, high and clear above her head.

She did not understand what was happening, but in a moment the deck, a second before so quiet, vibrated beneath rushing feet. Men were tearing canvas from a gun. Colonel Campbell was on deck; the Captain on the bridge called orders to his officers, who hurried hither and thither. Sailors fastened on ropes; others cleared the decks. Gretta and Denis could only shrink unnoticed against the door of the companionway, amazed and alarmed.

"What is it?" Gretta cried. "Oh, Denis, what can it be?"

"They are enemy ships," Denis answered. "We're going to see a fight, Gretta."

And now pipes were playing the old Jacobite music. "Dundee" it was. Gretta had not guessed how sound could beat through one's breast like the surging of a great tide. Nearer and nearer came the ships, looking like lovely birds, skimming along the water. A fight! Could that be, with the sea so blue and the sky so serene and the sails of the ships so white and full? The pipes throbbed on exultantly, while the bare knees of the kilted soldiers moved in rhythm. Then, at a word, the piping ceased, and, with a rattle and grunt, a ship's gun spoke. A lazy, dark little cloud floated up as if to make friends with a lazy little white cloud floating above it.

With a flash and a barking noise, the nearest ship replied. It turned and came on, perilously fast. Guns were snorting, recoiling, spitting fire, one by one, two by two.

"Ah, here ye are! Coom awa', my bairn.

'Tis no place for ye." Jeanie crawled to Gretta where she and Denis lay, never thinking of danger to themselves. "Coom below. 'Tis no place for ye here. Ah—the Lord protect us the noo!"

For a shot had gone home and bits of wood and metal were spat into the air and scattered over them as they crawled toward the cabin. Denis remained behind.

There were none but women and children there, huddled in groups in a stifling cabin that shook and rocked with the reverberation of the guns. There was nothing to see down here—no reassuring blue sky, nothing except white faces and the terrified eyes of children, nothing to be heard but the constant trampling overhead, voices calling incomprehensible commands, the coughing of guns. Panic was here. One poor woman frightened the next, and the children screamed to see their mothers afraid. Mrs. Bartholomew tried to quiet them. Gretta clung to Jeanie, wishing she were with Denis and could fight like a man! Suppose the ship were sunk, here

in sight of port. What would her father do then?

The porthole was darkened suddenly and the ship recoiled as under a great shock. The sounds above them changed. Guns were silent, but metal grated on metal; there were shouts, a trampling of many feet, and the sharper, clearer reports of flintlocks fired above their heads. Voices, fierce and angry, could be heard. The hatchway burst open and the body of a man fell among them, his eyes opened wide in a gaze of fixed surprise. Gretta, looking down on his young face, saw her enemy for the first time, and cried out in pity. But now they could hear more of the struggle—the groans and curses, the sharp commands, the endless scuffling, the snapping of the flintlocks, and then, quite suddenly, a bugle sounded, a harsh voice raised a triumphant shout, taken up by another. Some one was singing a strange song she had never heard—"Yankee Doodle came to town, On a little pony ——" Something like a sigh swept over the world, and then something

The Hatchway Broke Open and the Body of a Man Fell Among Them

like a silence fell, with only a low moan from a kilted soldier who lay at the top of the hatchway to break it, and only the open eyes of the dead boy to tell them what it meant.

They did not dare to stir, nor to weep. Was everyone dead? No. Orders were being given, feet were passing on the deck above. Gretta broke from Jeanie's arms and climbed to the hatch. A sailor was dragging a body across the deck. He looked down on her, wiping some of the black from his face with his sleeve, and grinned.

"Hello!" he said. "Who'd have thought it? 'Tis a little girl! Ye didn't know the redcoats were chased out of Boston Harbor weeks ago, did ye?" He laughed, and went on. Gretta heard a splash. They were throwing something overboard.

Oh, the pipes again! Her heart seemed to turn over within her. The "Lament"! What was it? For whom? Someone had died, who had left the hills of Scotland in the bonny April weather and would see them no more.

Who? Followed by Jeanie, she crept on to the dreadful deck. Wreckage lay everywhere, and among the spars and shreds of sails, the fallen guns and coils of rope, the barrels and chests and lanterns, were the figures of men, a few still and silent, others twisting or moving feebly or sitting with heads bowed on their knees.

It was in the center of all this that the pipers had gathered and were playing their saddest and sternest air, while the ship with unfurled sails and broken masts was drawn gently over the quiet sea into the harbor of Boston town. Gretta, stunned and silent, watched the spires of the churches rise before her, saw the long wharf with its cluster of buildings, saw the land and people walking on it, after the long weeks of tossing on a sea stormy and calm, gray and blue, menacing and smiling by turns.

Colonel Campbell was talking to some one in the bows. Gretta ran to him, and he turned with a start at her voice.

"I forgot the child!" he said. He turned

to his companion, a blue-coated gentleman with a three-cornered hat. "I shall be grateful, sir, if you will see that this young lady is well cared for," he said, formally. "Her father is in command of another of our transports, which escaped capture, I infer. She had relations in Boston, but ——"

"Not likely to be there now," the man turned to Gretta. "I'll do my best for the child, Colonel. I only hope they'll make you comfortable at Concord. They haven't much idea of looking after the British officers. But I'll do what I can, and the child will be all right."

The two men looked kindly at Gretta, but the colonel's face was harsh with chagrin.

"If we had had more ammunition ——" he muttered.

"Tut, man!" the other replied, laying a hand on his sleeve. "You could do nothing. You were under our batteries. 'Twas hopeless."

Gretta slipped away. She found Jeanie and Mrs. Bartholomew busy with the wounded,

and Denis was one of these. A spar had fallen on his head while he fought like a man, and he was still unconscious. They watched through the night, to the weary music of the pipes, for Colonel Menzies had been killed, and Highland hearts in captivity beat with shame and sorrow and had no way of expressing all their woe but this.

It was Gretta who saw Denis open his eyes and who answered his questions, for Mrs. Bartholomew had dropped asleep, exhausted with anxiety. A lantern swung in the cabin. The ship was at anchor.

Gretta crept to Denis's side, and just then he opened his eyes and asked, "What has happened?"

She whispered an answer.

"Yes—yes and I remember—" he seemed to drift away. "No—I can't—" Mrs. Bartholomew woke with a start and bent over him, but he shut his eyes again.

Gretta slept at last, and woke when a harsh but kindly voice said in her ear. "Well, little lady, time to see what the new country's like,

I guess." A big man was bending over her and there was Jeanie dressed in cloak and hood and tying up a bundle. Gretta was ready herself in a trice and, in spite of everything, felt a thrill of gladness when she stepped up into the sunshine and saw a big rowboat bobbing up and down beside the ship. She swarmed down the ladder after Jeanie, and was handed to her place in the bows. Oars struck the water. She looked up at the brave ship which had suffered so much and bade it farewell in her heart. For it was familiar, and but for Jeanie, nothing else was.

"A good ship," the man who seemed to be in command remarked to her, "and had not your ammunition given out we should not have had so easy a victory, although we were three to one. Brave men, Campbell and Menzies." He lifted his three-cornered hat gravely and Gretta was surprised by the act into liking him. This would never do. She had pitied a dead enemy and now she was liking a live one. She frowned on the ribbon bow which tied the gentleman's hair.

"What a lot of churches!" she whispered to Jeanie, "and all of them with pointed spires."

"Aye, and a strange land it is when folk will gang to kirk of a Sabbath and do sich evil deeds 'twixt ane Sabbath and the next!" she replied, severely.

"Oh, Jeanie, will father be here, do you think?"

The gentleman who had spoken before turned at that.

"Was your father on another transport?" he asked, quickly. Then he shook his head. "Safe with Howe on Staten Island, I should say," he continued. "Yours is the last of the lot. The others must have been warned. However, 'tis a grand haul—three hundred picked troops and their officers. They made a show marching off to Concord before you were awake this morning!" He smiled at Gretta.

"Do you think my father is at that place you spoke of?" Gretta besought him. "Is it far? Can I go there?"

"I think it likely he is. As for your going there, I doubt it. I know a place in Boston where I will take you. There is a child about your age."

"I have cousins in Boston. The Lathrops. Do you know them, sir?" Gretta asked. This was an enemy, but she might as well be civil.

"The Lathrops? Yes." His face darkened. "They've gone with Howe."

"Then I've nobody to go to—nobody at all." Gretta looked back despairingly at the ship she had left. "What shall I do?"

"The fortune of war, my child," he said, gently. "I'll see that you are placed with kind people."

"But they'll be rebels," cried Gretta, "I couldn't live with them."

"Patriots, child. To them you will be a Royalist—and an enemy. You will both have to bear it. This is war. And let me warn you to remember that all are not like myself. Every war attracts the scoundrels and wastrels and there are many such among us. Keep silence and no one will harm you."

Keep silence! And her father fighting for the King while she must live with rebels and traitors, no one knew how long! The steeples of the churches receded as the boat neared the shore, and she saw low wooden houses and curious faces looking down at her. Fingers were pointing; hostile glances were turned on her. She could hear voices that said—she did not know what. The boat was drawn to the shore and grounded. Her friend of the three-cornered hat gave her his hand. She stepped out on to the shores of this strange country.

"Why, 'tis nought but a child!" said one.

"Aye, the child of one that will kill your own child maybe, Mistress Greensleeve. Do not forget that."

A murmur rose among the women standing there, and Gretta looked up at them doubtfully, while Jeanie bristled with anger. Some of the younger ones pressed forward, making a circle around them.

"Look at the fine lady, she is!" cried a girl. "Faith, I've not seen a gown so near

the new style of which my sister Felicia wrote me. 'Tis the pointed bodice that they talk of. Have you other frocks, child, and will you show them to us?"

The temper of the group had changed. As Gretta's friend said, "Will some one take these two to Mistress Lawson in School Street?" a motherly person came forward. "Yes, Mistress Falcon, I shall be obliged to you. Is that the doctor's gig I see? The very thing. They have had enough of our provincial curiosity, methinks. Come, good folk. The child cannot help it if her father be a redcoat! Let her pass."

Safe within the raised hood of the gig, Gretta looked out on the town of Boston, which showed the signs of its recent occupation by the enemy. There were few paved streets and those were in need of repair. The wooden houses wanted paint. Grass grew rank in the yards and hogs ran freely in the roadway. Yet there was a kind of beauty, too. Trees grew taller than, though not so broad as those in her grandfather's park. Many

streets were deeply shaded. Where cobbles ended, the roads were hushed in yellow sand. The white houses with cool green shutters seemed friendly, in spite of their unfamiliarity. Once they passed what had been a fine brick mansion, but was now a charred ruin.

"There are many such," the doctor said. "The British took the old North Church, too, and used it for firewood. But the old South they used worse than that!" He stopped abruptly.

They turned into a broad thoroughfare and stopped at a gate giving on a path which led to a green door. The whole face of the house was as square as one of the glass panes of the windows, placed evenly along it. It was not at all like Lulworth Hall, nor like Glennish, nor yet was it like a farmer's house or laborer's cottage at home.

Gretta felt a moment's alarm when a woman with a perfectly black face opened the door. Then she remembered the negroes. She had never seen one before.

"Yessa, Mis' Lawson she to home, sah.

Will yous all walk right in?" She beamed on them widely and they followed her into a room, square like the rest of the house, with a piece of furniture in each corner and a table in the middle, a book on each corner of that, and a brass candelabrum in the center.

The negro left them. They had only a moment to wait before the door opened to admit a lady in a gray dress. She turned her gentle face toward Gretta.

"'Tis a little English girl, Mistress Lawson," explained Mistress Falcon, "and Captain Mainwaring thought you would lodge her for the present."

"That I will," replied the lady, without surprise. "I was told of the captured transport. Harriet shall share her room with thee, my dear. And thou?" she turned to Jeanie —"thou art not her mother?"

"Her servant, ma'am," answered Jeanie.

"Then I must find room for thee, too. Were many injured? I heard so." She had turned to the doctor.

"Aye—and hundreds of prisoners of war besides these." He smiled on Gretta.

A prisoner of war. Of course she was! She had not realized it before. But prisoners sometimes escaped, and her father was at the place with that odd name, but near New York. It could not be so very far away.

CHAPTER XII

Poor Denis

MISTRESS LAWSON was a Quaker, and so, of course, was her daughter Harriet. Gretta had heard Quakers laughed at as a sort of curiosity, persons who said "thee" and "thou" and thought one incurred eternal punishment for indulging in a single game of "loo" or "hazard." She could hear Lady Eastlake's exclamation of horror at the idea of her being in the care of such persons, "and drawn from the lower middle class, my dear. Conceive it! Tradespeople!" Her consternation would have been unbounded.

Jeanie distrusted them for other reasons. Being an ardent Presbyterian herself, accustomed to the detailed and long-worded prayers of the Scotch ministers of her day, she regarded the prayer of silence with ex-

treme distrust. "Thinkin' of their cakes in the ashes and their sheep on the hillside, I'll be bound!" she expostulated to Gretta, forgetting that American housewives used ovens and the Quaker gentlemen were not as a rule farmers, but men of property.

Gretta, remembering her father, kept her prejudices to herself. She was dependent on these people and dared not offend them. Mrs. Bartholomew was ill with the smallpox, a legacy left to the town by the departed army, and she had not seen Denis.

Mistress Lawson was kind and Harriet was not at all a bad sort of child, prim in her speech and often shocked by Gretta, but inclined to admire her, ready to listen with wide eyes to all her stories of England.

"I do fear that many in that country be lost souls," Harriet sighed, on hearing of the betting at horse races and the gambling at cards. "No doubt 'tis Providence has brought thee here, Gretta, meaning to save thee among the blessed."

Thereupon arose an argument, heated on both sides.

"And my great-great grandfather endowed three churches," finished Gretta, "and has a tomb with his statue in marble, with angels watching round, and a verse to say how good he was."

" 'Tis known that the Church of England is sadly corrupt," Harriet replied, complacently.

"And my uncle and aunt are Scotch Presbyterians and they think cards and dancing are wicked, too"—Gretta was nearly weeping now, for Harriet had been rather convincing with her quotations from Scripture —"and anyway," she suddenly thought, "George Washington gambles. My father told me he won a half-jo from him at 'loo'."

This did cause consternation. "It cannot be true," Harriet asserted. "General Washington is a good man as well as a great one. Thou shouldst not say such things. And thy father ——"

"Don't dare to say a word against my

father. If he does a thing—well, 'tis right!" Gretta's eyes gave pause to Harriet's ready tongue, and Mistress Lawson, entering at the moment, put a stop to the dispute. Seeing the two flushed faces, she said "Tut-tut, my children! Is there not enough of anger and cruelty in the hearts of men and women today without the children quarreling as well? Why this strife?"

Harriet explained, and what had seemed so important before seemed rather silly now.

"God judges not as we judge—do thou recollect that," directed Mistress Lawson. "And thou, Harriet, who hast had the advantage of the very teaching thou dost praise, wouldst not defend it better by gentleness and charity than by anger and unkindness? Be friends again, my dears. You can agree on many things. Why select those on which you cannot, to discuss? For a punishment, be silent until the table is spread and reflect on the words, 'God is Love'!"

But if on this occasion the blame fell on Harriet, at another time Gretta was at fault.

The two girls were excused from Wednesday's meeting, and left at home to lay the supper, but Gretta had been telling Harriet about a rout which her grandmother had described, and the head dresses worn by some of the ladies, and they began to experiment in styles. Harriet had a magnificent supply of fine pale hair. Gretta piled this over a pillow borrowed from the best bedroom, and fixed it in place with some pins her grandmother had sent her. Next, the whole had to be powdered, and as there was no such thing as hair powder to be had, they rifled the flour barrel, and soon the imposing erection was whitened. Decorations were now required—and supplied. A chain of pansies and forget-me-nots looped gracefully around the top of the edifice, while, by a special inspiration, a bunch of baby carrots, and another of ripe cherries, were hung below. Sundry ribbon bows from Gretta's wardrobe relieved any bare spaces left, and the work of art was complete.

"But art sure they use carrots?" objected

Harriet, turning her weighted head stiffly toward Gretta.

"Grandmother said she saw a lady wearing them. And turnips," Gretta added, reassuringly. "But oh, Harriet, you must change your dress. I've the very thing."

The alteration of wardrobe was effected with difficulty, but when it was finished, and undergarments turned back to display Harriet's neck, the effect was striking.

"But you want some feathers—a fan and —— There's no room here. Come into the parlor." The parlor was the stiff and spacious room which Gretta had first seen.

"But we are not allowed ——"

"Oh, just this once. I've never been forbidden. We shan't do any harm." Harriet was overruled.

Procuring a feather at some peril from the cock in the yard, Gretta was in the act of placing it at the apex of her masterpiece, and both girls, completely forgetful of time, were studying the effect in a mirror, perched against the candelabrum for the purpose,

when the door opened and Mistress Lawson entered, followed by three Quaker ladies who had been to the meeting.

No one spoke. No one moved. Then Mistress Lawson, very quietly, walked to the table and laid the mirror face downward upon it.

"Gretta, wilt thou get a cloth and wipe the flour from the floor and brush the carpet?" she directed.

Gretta started to obey, but as she knelt down she met the glance of a woman who had been among the crowd which had jeered at her when she stepped from the boat onto American soil. She had been repentant, but now she was angry. She remembered her grandmother and could see her fastidious eyebrows raised as her granddaughter groveled at the feet of these rebellious and insignificant subjects of the King. She rose to her feet.

"I will summon my servant to sweep your floor, if you please, Mistress Lawson"—she tossed the cloth to a chair as she spoke—"for

my father would not have me to do the work of menials."

As she turned from the woman who had aroused her ire, to Mistress Lawson, gentle but stern, she felt suddenly humbled and ashamed. Most of these women were ladies, yet they did not hesitate to go onto their knees to scour a floor if occasion demanded, and she had sense enough to know that they were all the greater ladies for that.

She might have shown her regret had not the sound of drums interrupted the drama taking place in the quiet room. Even these self-contained Quakers forgot themselves when a company of Rangers marched down the street. They ran to the doorway, and Harriet, divested of the cushion, but still unusually pale with fright and flour, joined them, while Gretta, hardly knowing what to do, looked on from the parlor window.

Accustomed to the drilled ranks of the highly trained British army, these lines of marching men did not seem like soldiers to her. Most of them wore gray hunting-shirts.

Here and there an officer might be distinguished by a colored ribbon sewn to his coat. One rode by, wearing a hat with a cockade, and this was the colonel. The men laughed and joked as they trudged along, carrying their firelocks loosely and only keeping in step when the drums and fife marked time. Gretta remembered her grandmother's description of the Guards in their gallant red and tall buskins. She thought of the Highland regiments with their broadswords and vicious-looking dirks. Some of these soldiers were old, some young, some gay, some grave. They swung along, cheered by the people, down the street, and the band took up the familiar "Yankee Doodle" which was familiar enough to Gretta now.

In the wake of the diminishing files of soldiers skipped a boy playing on a kind of flute.

"Why, 'tis Denis!" Gretta cried, just as he reached the window where she stood.

He heard her and looked up, but his face was vacant and his eyes unseeing. She ran out

and pressed through the group of women, and caught him as he passed the gate, but he only shook off her hand from his arm and continued his silly playing.

"Do not trouble the lad." Mistress Lawson had moved to Gretta's side. "He be daft, I fear, since his mother died of the smallpox."

"The lad never got well of some blow he received," one of the ladies said. "His wits are gone, poor thing! The minister is kind to him."

Gretta turned away, sick at heart. Poor Denis! She would never laugh at him again.

CHAPTER XIII

A Mysterious Message

WORK was a word which Gretta had understood to refer to the beading of purses, or more serious attention to the tapestry work so much in vogue, or a descent in person on regions usually ignored when dairy maids and still-room maids and kitchen maids received reproof or praise, as the case might be. But work in Boston town in 1776 was another matter altogether. By work the population was clothed, fed, and housed, and everyone, save the sick, the very old, or the very young did his or her share. The easy days when ships from abroad supplied drapers with English woolens at moderate prices were gone. French goods were sold, it is true, but at a high cost, and the housewives saved expense by spinning their own

thread and employing a local weaver. This was the practice of Mistress Lawson.

At mealtime Gretta listened with forced patience to a daily thanksgiving for deliverance from British oppression. She knew that the people had suffered from the blockade, but, of course, the soldiers had suffered, too. However, the price of food had risen so high during the preceding winter that strict economy, even in such moderately affluent houses as that of Mistress Lawson, was the rule. Everything was measured, counted, weighed, and Gretta for the first time understood the labor, thought, and skill which preceded the most commonplace meal. At Lulworth these things had come her way apparently without much effort. A silver dish was brought in by a footman; the cover was lifted, and there was the joint of veal, or roasted fowls, or a haunch of venison, and should anything be underdone or overdone, or a sauce fall short of perfection, one had a right to resent it. But here one was supposed to be grateful for

every mouthful and complaints were repressed with emphasis.

The spinning-wheel was not a machine which one wielded for fun now and again, but a necessity in daily use. Gretta found that Mistress Lawson's spinning was of a very superior quality, even though her instrument was not of the newest type lately purchased for Lulworth.

Jeanie, an expert in these matters, worked hard for her daily bread, on the principle that she could not be beholden to an enemy. The negro servant, a freed woman, was employed all day in the kitchen, and Harriet and Gretta were not excused by their youth from spending their time in some form of usefulness. Gentle as Mistress Lawson might seem, she had no doubt at all about what was good for young people, and however busy she might be, she was always aware when some one in the house was idle.

It was at such a moment on a July day that she sent Gretta to the weaver to bring home some cloth which was to be made into

garments for the winter. Jeanie was busy in the laundry, and Harriet was helping her mother in a delicate operation of stoning peaches for preserves. The whole house hummed softly with the activity of its inmates, and Gretta alone, having finished hemming a pile of sheets, was unoccupied. There was a harpsichord in the parlor and she opened it, suddenly homesick. She could see the blue drawing-room at Lulworth and the tulip-wood spinet at which her grandmother sometimes played pretty tinkling tunes. She tried to pick out the air of a song she had heard on the transport.

"I've heard them lilting at the ewe milking,
Lasses a-lilting before dawn of day;
But now they are moaning, on ilka green loaming;
The flowers of the forest are a' wede away."

She sang, and just as she finished, light as air, a leaf of paper blew to her feet. She picked it up and saw that it was a page from a volume of Shakespeare's plays. She read a

little, finding, to her surprise, that certain words were underlined with ink.

"Cheer-your-heart"—then lower down, "friends" and still lower on the page, "at hand."

But Mistress Lawson was calling.

"Gretta, wilt go to weaver for the home-spun for thy winter frock? And wear thy pattens. 'Tis moist underfoot since last night's rain and thy shoes are none so serviceable as I could wish."

Gretta hated the pattens, for they slipped off in the mud and had to be salvaged under the eye of any amused pedestrian who chanced to be near. Her grandmother had sent them in the outfit which she had deemed necessary for Gretta's voyage, and they were of well-seasoned Russian leather and stout of sole. She might have forgotten to wear them had she not dreaded the time when her own pretty shoes would wear out and be replaced by the coarsely sewn articles thought suitable for girls of her age. Gretta, careless

enough of finery when she was expected to wear it often, began to value it as a link with home, now that she was likely to be without it soon.

The marked leaf excited her. Why were those words so marked and whence had the leaf blown? Was it accident or had some one tried in this way to send her a message?

The weaver's house was at no great distance. Gretta removed her pattens on the doorstep and entered to wait while the weaver's wife tied up the bundle. When she came out, her arms full of the heavy cloth, she stuck her feet into the pattens again, and gave an exclamation of annoyance, which something warned her to check.

"Is aught wrong, my dear?" inquired the kindly woman.

"Nay, 'tis naught. I struck my toe on the step, Mistress Weaver," replied Gretta politely.

The fact was, there was something in the toe of the patten. Gretta did not dare to look

until, removing the pattens at the door of Mistress Lawson's house, she could do so without being observed.

She found a small ball of paper, and hid it in the bosom of her gown before she went into the house.

Opportunities for complete privacy were not frequent in the Quaker household, but fortunately there was a time when one was left completely alone and this was on the occasion of taking a bath. It happened to be Gretta's day for this serious operation, and when she had furnished herself with the essentials—a great tub set on a special splashing mat, with ewers of water, and unbleached towels of coarse linen, a dish of homemade soap of which she had been cautioned to be economical—she shut the door of the room she shared with Harriet, secure from interruption.

The room was quiet, but subdued sounds drifted in at the window, over which the fine muslin curtains had been carefully drawn

and fastened together lest a stray breeze should part them and disclose so much as a glimpse of the room where a bath was in progress. Gretta instinctively took pains to prevent the water from making much noise as it flowed from the ewer into the bath.

Before undressing she opened the piece of paper and spread it before her, her heart beating swiftly. What could it be?

As she began to read, amazement paralyzed her, and she stood, in her shift, the paper in her hands, unable to believe what she saw.

There were two verses written in a sprawling, illiterate hand, and when she had finished them she crumpled the paper in her fist and threw it from her, her eyes filled with indignant tears. For this is what she read.

'Tis a shame that so blindly
A lady so kindly
  Should sinfully open to vipers her door.
No Freeman should ever
From loyalty sever
  His heart! To the tyrant 'tis closed evermore.

A soldier or hero
For Monarchs like Nero
Now wonder and horror must feel and must shew.
Fools will pity the Tory
Though battle-fields gory
Are strewn with the fallen
The Tories laid low.

Such verses with less than no literary merit appeared in papers and were circulated in leaflets by patriots who had nothing better to do, but this was worse, for it was meant as an attack on her, and after all how could she help herself? She was only a little girl.

She bathed, handicapped in the operation by a flow of tears which would not be stayed. In her mind the sad air she had played that morning drifted through her mind—"The flowers of the forest are a' wede away."

She had just stepped out of the bath and was drying herself, with occasional dabs at her eyes, reveling for once in complete misery and self-pity, when a sudden thought did more in a second to arrest the tears than other

means would have accomplished in an hour. Forgetting modesty, the rules of which recommended as speedy a clothing of her person as possible, she ran to the corner where the ball of paper had rolled, and opened it eagerly.

Yes, the rhythm was exactly the same as that of the song which had been ringing in her ears. Was this accident? If so, a very strange one, following the incident of the morning. If not accident, had the same person sent both messages, and, if so, why should the first have been so friendly and the second so hostile?

Was there a hidden meaning?

She remembered that on the ship she and Denis had talked about codes and he had told her that some people said there was a hidden code in Shakespeare. The message of this morning had come on a sheet out of Shakespeare's works. And now this! If Denis had been in his normal condition she would have believed the messages came from him. She scrutinized the writing for some sign, and

could find none, except—and at this discovery her heart gave a leap—certain letters were traced slightly more deeply than others! She hastily put these together, and as she did so her heart beat thickly, for S, I, N were the first three, and these were the last letters of "Denis," inverted. The next two were o, p, and the next made no sense at all. This is the order:

SIN op NOFFS NOW WO HOW FOOW

She puzzled and puzzled over these. Finally she reasoned that Denis must have borrowed the verses and concocted some message which seemed to make sense to his distorted mind. Yet she could not give up, and only a sharp tap on the door and Mistress Lawson's reminder that Harriet was waiting for the tub roused her to finish her dressing.

She stowed away the paper in its former place of concealment, and performed the task of tidying the room. As a mild punishment for wasted time she was sent to gather dandelions for soup, a job which Mistress

Lawson knew she disliked, but which was welcome today, for it gave her a moment of privacy. In the big field near the Common where dandelions were abundant she drew out the verses for a third inspection.

This time accident befriended her, for she held the paper upside down and saw at once that the darkened letters *were all to be read that way*. The W in will made an M. The two O's in "fools" had small extensions, as if carelessly penned, which made them into e's, and the slovenly capital F made a fairly respectable small T. The H in "horror" was only half darkened, and that half made a capital C. This is how the letters went.

M . . . . eet
Me
COmmon
s t
ten
denis.

"Meet me Common St. ten Denis!"

It was a message and it made sense! The verses were only a blind, and no doubt Denis

had invented them. Was his silliness a blind, too?

At ten it would be quite dark, and no one was allowed to be out after dark except on business, but tonight was an exception to this rule, for exciting news had been received from Congress. Exciting news indeed! At last the thirteen Colonies had been declared an independent republic, rumor said. Some one had lighted a bonfire on the Common, and even Mistress Lawson's cheeks were flushed and she locked the doors of her house and went out with the two girls to hear the news.

There were others bent on the same errand and there was much discussion about the great step taken.

Gretta might have thought more of what she heard had it not been for her own private excitement. She knew Common Street and could find it and return alone to the house, but Mistress Lawson kept a watchful eye on her charges and it would have been difficult to evade her vigilance even had Harriet not clung to Gretta.

It was the passing of an excited mob, which filled the street and swept by them toward the Common, that gave Gretta her chance.

"They're going to burn the Pope," some one shouted.

Gretta had heard of this mysterious rite, and she knew that it meant danger, for the people who took part in it would work themselves into a frenzy in which they would be capable of anything.

Harriet had left her for a moment to speak to a friend, and Mistress Lawson was expostulating with a lad who was running excitedly toward the crowd. She was, just then, too preoccupied to notice what Gretta did. The crowd flowed between them, and the abrupt darkness of the New England summer night hid them from each other.

Gretta was alone.

She folded her wrap around her shoulders and hurried toward the meeting-place. This street was crowded, too. All the better for their purpose. As she walked along she saw

Denis leaning against a tree, looking vacantly at the people. If she walked past him and back again it would be quite dark. In any case, no one would wonder if she should be noticed speaking to him. She sauntered on, trying to seem calm, with her breath coming and going as fast as that of a runner in a race. When she thought she had gone far enough she turned and came back, looking to right and left as if she had lost her friends and sought to rejoin them. She paused. He smiled at her, and said,

"That's a pretty song you sing."

"You can sing it, too."

"Yes, and others like it. I can make them. They amuse me. There is nothing else to do here. I'm tired of this place. Aren't you?"

"Yes," whispered Gretta.

Something passed from his hand to hers.

"Good-night," he said. "There's to be a great celebration tomorrow. I'm going to see it."

He wandered off toward the Common and Gretta hurried homeward. At the corner she

met Mistress Lawson looking anxiously for her. To her question Gretta replied, "I wanted to talk to Denis."

After all, why not? Mistress Lawson reproved her for the risk she had run and the anxiety she had caused, and they returned home.

The letter Denis had given her had to wait, for candles were not wasted and Harriet extinguished their common one as soon as both girls were in bed. It was an ordeal to lie wakeful, inventing a thousand explanations for Denis's strange procedure, but at last Gretta slept, still aware of the paper pinned to her nightdress. The earliest gray of morning woke her and, when she remembered why, she lay patiently at Harriet's side in the big bed, fearing that she might wake as well. But Harriet slept on, and with infinite caution Gretta read:

Destroy this completely when you have read it. At any moment they may discover that I am only pretending to be simple and my chance of escape will be gone.

Next week a boat will be waiting at Marblehead Neck to take you and Jeanie and myself to Staten Island. We are to leave Boston by different routes. The celebration tomorrow will give us our chance. You will find a farm wagon at Fish St. Tavern, at three. It will take you to Cambridge. There you will be concealed by a gentleman who will find means of getting you to Marblehead. I am going another way, quicker but more dangerous. This has all been planned by a friend who is here, and your father knows.

That was all.

She had to tell Jeanie and make what preparation she dared for a journey.

Today!

The gray dawn spread to the corners of the room, its grayness melting in rose. Soon the whole industrious household would be astir.

Gretta read the letter over again until she could remember every word. When she had done this, she crept cautiously from her bed and out of the room, down to the empty kitchen, where embers still showed a ruddy glow on the hearth, for baking had been

done last night. Her letter was now flaming gaudily—then it was a scattered fluff of ash.

As she turned she heard a hand on the knob. The door opened and Jeanie herself came in.

Gretta almost forgot her caution in her relief.

"Oh, Jeanie ——" she cried, and checked herself swiftly. In a low voice she told her everything that had happened.

"Aye," whispered Jeanie, "the Lord will care for his ain! Did I not say it? Prayers of silence! Why for should He no understand plain language as well as another? 'Rescue us, Lord, from rebels and traitors!' is what I said, and is it no what He has done? Gang to your bed, and pray to Him to bring us safe to your father and my Jamsie, and mind ye say it in plain words, lassie, for 'tis not hard o' hearing He'll be, Who taught the burns to ripple on the hillside and the wind to sing in the heather on Ben Greet."

CHAPTER XIV

A Friend from Home

THE City of Boston prepared to celebrate a great event. New flags hung in all their bravery from doorways and windowsills, the bright stripes and thirteen white stars, charged today with a meaning they had never borne before.

Mistress Lawson had not made a flag, for it was against her Quaker principles to encourage war, but the celebration of the birth of independence for her country seemed to her another matter, and she told the household that it would be a holiday and that they might go to hear the Declaration read at the State House.

She called Gretta aside, and spoke to her gently.

"'Tis safer for thee to bide at home with

Jeanie," she said. "War is a cruel thing, my child, and stirs the evil in every breast. Even those who pray to keep an untroubled mind in the midst of it are tainted by the glamour and the pomp, the shouting and the glory, aye, and by the defeat and sorrow their minds are warped and hardened too. I know thou art unhappy so far from home and parted from thy father, but remember this—saddest moments well spent are those God blesses. Aye, and thou wilt understand that one day. A big heart, a strong soul, an understanding mind—these come to no one save by one sure way—the way of suffering. Comfort thyself. If thou shouldst wish for help, there is the Book, always open. Help is there and plenty."

"You have been kind to me, Mistress Lawson," Gretta was moved to say.

"Nay, I have been but Christian. And, Gretta, this I will tell thee. I have asked those that should know if thou wilt not be sent to thy own people in Staten Island, but at present it is no place for a child. When

the time comes it may be arranged. Now content thee here while I am gone. Jeanie will make thee some buckwheat cakes for thy dinner and there is the new maple sugar ready for melting on the shelf in the cellar. I will not grudge thee a cake of that."

Gretta never forgot her last sight of the gentle lady in her little gray cape and bonnet as she walked with Harriet down the street toward the center of the town. Already there was music and the sound of soldiers marching, for regiments were being paraded in King Street.

Gretta and Jeanie set about their preparations for their journey with methodical haste. Provisions for a few hours were packed in a clean kerchief, and a change of garments in Jeanie's plaid. Jeanie cooked a good meal, and just as they sat down to eat it a shouting, greater in volume than anything Gretta had ever heard, alarmed them. Almost at the same time the report of a cannon vibrated through the house—then another and another. "One—two—three," counted Jeanie,

standing, a platter in one hand and a jug in the other, "eight, nine, ten—thirteen. 'Tis the number of the Colonies. Rebellious rapscalkins, they be! And God alone in His heaven kens where my Jamsie may be this day."

Boston town had gone wild with joy. No longer rebellious subjects of an infuriated monarch, but free citizens of a republic all their own! Was it not enough to make them shout and sing? Now indeed the war must be won, whatever it might mean of sacrifice in men and fortune! There was no retreat possible, for had not their own leaders signed the document, and would they not be executed as traitors were the American states ever to acknowledge the overlordship of the English crown again?

Gretta did not think of all this, but she felt the thrill that swept the city under its canopy of green leaves, and it made her more restless and excited than ever. To find her father and return to those who thrilled for British victories, to whom rebels were rebels

and not patriots, and the name of redcoat and tory not used in scorn.

"Oh, hurry, Jeanie—do hurry!" she begged.

No day could have been better for their purpose. Later, perhaps, the crowd might be swayed by its uglier elements, but now all was good nature and joy. Only the older and soberer of the people shook their heads, for news of the army was far from good. Bad news from Canada, bad news from the South, bad news from New York where the British were making ready for a great attack, and this was the time chosen by Congress to throw a last challenge to the enemy! Pessimists watched the excited crowd and bided their time, certain that it would come.

The inn to which Gretta and Jeanie were directed was situated in one of the squalid streets leading to a wharf, and when they reached it, it seemed so forbidding that Jeanie hesitated at the low-hanging doorway, before using a brass knocker grimed with neglect. The door was opened by a little boy, in the

same case as the knocker, who silently let them in and disappeared to summon an old man, greatly disturbed by his responsibilities, his son being out watching the fun, he explained. Would the ladies be seated? He had been told to expect them.

Even as he talked there was a rumble of wheels on the cobbles and the knocker sent a peremptory summons through the house.

"Hast got the merchandise?" a voice inquired. "If so, bring it out, good father, for I have no time to waste. Must be over Boston Neck before nightfall and well on the road home."

The little old man, flurried and anxious, signaled to Gretta and Jeanie, who emerged from behind a big settle. They saw the very picture of the honest farmer afterward embodied in the drawings of Uncle Sam. He was lean and active, bearded, and dressed in the high boots and homespuns of the time. They followed him and allowed themselves to be concealed with sacking in the back of the cart.

Jeanie Hesitated at the Low Hanging Doorway

"Jest till we're out of Boston, Misses," the farmer explained. "Efter that you can be my wife and datter, eh?" He clambered to his seat, took the reins, and drove forward, his lean horse pulling the clumsy cart valiantly through the town.

He chose the less frequented streets and they were stopped only once, by a crowd of people who had collected before the door of some well-known patriot to listen to a speech. It was an agonizing ten moments, for Gretta could hear the badinage exchanged by the farmer with some wit in the crowd, and once the people swarmed so close about her that she feared to make the slightest movement. At last, however, they were free to drive on.

The heat became stifling and the jolting of the springless vehicle aggravated their discomfort. It seemed that evening would never come, but when the wash of water told them that they were driving along Boston Neck they knew they were out of Boston at last!

It was dusk when the cart stopped and

the farmer got down and lifted the sacking that covered them.

Then came the great surprise of the day, for the bearded farmer Gretta looked for had gone, and in his place stood Mr. Jimmy.

She flung herself on him. He seemed a solid bit of home, and even Jeanie, who had been strong in her disapprobation of his behavior, gave an exclamation of pleasure.

"Weel—who wad hae thought it!" she remarked with all a true Scot's reluctance to seem greatly surprised at anything. "I did think, sir, I'd noo be pleased to see a lawbreaker in a lone spot like this, but when ye've had naught but rebels about ye 'tis something to see a subject of the King even if he be English and none too loyal at that."

"Oh, Jeanie," cried Gretta, "how can you be so unkind, when Mr. Jimmy has rescued us!"

"A man must do something," Mr. Jimmy put in, "and Jeanie thinks rightly I could do no less than come to the aid of a young lady

who saved my life! Besides, it has been monstrous good fun!"

"But how did you get here and why aren't you fighting?" cried Gretta.

A shade passed over his face.

"They won't have me," he answered, lightly. "I must get the King's pardon before I can serve him, it seems. So"—he shrugged his shoulders—"I do what I can, where I can. And a rough business it is sometimes. But here's a spring, Mistress Gretta—not so luxurious as the bathhouse at Lulworth, but still a place where one may wash and refresh oneself. Are you not ready for a drink, too? This water is pure and better than wine on a day like this."

When they had drunk of this bubbling water, bathed their faces and wrists, they felt born again. Gretta mounted beside Mr. Jimmy and listened to his adventures. He had managed to secure a passage on one of the food ships from Plymouth earlier in the year, and had landed at Boston while the town was occupied by the British. He had

thought of obtaining a commission or regular employment as dispatch-rider, but his story was known and Sir William Howe would not have anything to say to him. His friends among the officers could do little for him. He had obtained a small skiff and made a little money by organizing foraging expeditions on his own responsibility, and selling the food to the troops. Some farmers were not unwilling to receive high prices for meat and vegetables if they could do so without the knowledge of their neighbors. Mr. Jimmy had quite a collection of friends who were neither rebels nor loyalists and saw no reason why they should not profit by the dispute. They had not asked for a change. They had been content enough as they were, although not averse to belonging to a republic, if that was how matters turned out. What they did want was a good market for their crops, and this Mr. Jimmy assisted them to get.

"I've fallen between two stools here," Mr. Jimmy laughed. "The King won't let me

fight for him and I won't fight against him; neither will I starve, so I must look for adventure where I can find it, and make a living out of it somehow."

It was through friends made in this way that he had been able to help Gretta. He would find his way to Westchester County later on. In the meantime he was picking up information which might be of use. "I'm king of the cowboys," he laughed. "In case you don't know who they are, they change sides as often as it is convenient to do so, and make a good thing out of it. The scum of the earth, I assure you, Mistress Gretta, and many are arrant cowards. Anyone could rule them with an unloaded dueling pistol and a steady eye. But you are tired. Come lean on me and wrap this around you." He produced a blanket, and settling her in the crook of his shoulder, made her so comfortable that she was soon fast asleep.

The hot day was followed by a lovely night, velvety and gemmed with stars and fireflies. Gretta dozed, and woke to hear

Jeanie talking in broad dialect to Mr. Jimmy; slept again, and woke only to be lifted down and led into a hall dimly lighted by one candle, up some stairs to a room where a huge bedstead with four posts and linen hangings was all she saw.

"Good-night, little lady," she heard Mr. Jimmy say as he laid her on the bed and kissed her hand. "We will meet again."

She bade him a drowsy good-night and fell asleep.

When she woke Jeanie was in the room, drawing aside her curtains, her dark eyes bright with excitement.

"Look ye, my dear," she said, "we must bestir ourselves, for 'tis a long journey we mun tak' this day."

When they were dressed and ready a man-servant supplied them with breakfast and a parcel of food for their journey, mounted them on two bony horses, and pointed out their way.

"What became of Mr. Jimmy?" asked

Gretta. "Oh, I wish I'd thanked him properly, Jeanie."

"He didna care to be thankit," Jeanie replied. "For one sae lawless, he is na sae evil as ye might expect. He told me what to do. We will find a guide outside the town. 'Tis safer to gang by oursel's till then."

They passed Harvard College with its square-faced buildings set opposite one another, the central one facing the street, from which it was separated by a low wall. Gretta remembered the great town of Cambridge in England and its colleges grouped without original plan, apparently, but interesting, as these raw buildings were not. Yet there was a purposefulness about them which impressed her, and frightened her a little, too. It was true of the people and places in America which she had seen that they seemed to aim at something definite. They were too energetic to accept laws they did not like. She tried to think about the difference between the life here in which days were filled with the effort to achieve something, and that at

Lulworth which seemed so very full of pleasant things achieved long ago, but it was a brilliant summer morning and the country was fresh and fair, and she was riding to find her father once more, so that it was difficult to think of other things.

Jeanie's mount was troublesome, as Jeanie was not a horsewoman by temperament or training and bumped up and down in the saddle in a way which annoyed the beast. He cast an angry glance across his shoulder, shook himself, bucked twice, and rolled Jeanie off into the sandy road. He then turned his face toward home and trotted quietly back toward Cambridge.

This would have been a disaster without qualification, had not an obliging boy, seeing the incident, deftly caught the dragging rein and led the charger back to the indignant maid.

"And he said 'twas a quiet beastie!" Jeanie expostulated as she rewarded the child.

"What's a beastie?" asked the child.

"Oh, do be careful!" ejaculated Gretta.

"I know what you are; you're British!" cried the lad, pointing a finger at Gretta. "But ye're a pretty gal and I won't tell on ye!"

This incident made them more cautious, and by dint of hanging on to the reins and pommel Jeanie managed to retain her saddle until they reached the ferry, where a lad waited with a change of horses.

At night, by aid of a deaf-and-dumb guide who met them at the ferry, they found themselves at the doors of an empty farmhouse, where Jeanie had been told they would find food and shelter for themselves and their two horses. They were told, also, to beware of stragglers, for although danger of capture as prisoners of war was probably over, danger from rough treatment of another sort was not. The road to Marblehead lay straight before them.

Jeanie lit a fire and made tea in a broken pot that hung in the kitchen. The house had been used by anyone who happened to find it

convenient. Its owners were among the loyalists who had fled to Halifax with Howe. There were still odds and ends of china which had been left behind and had not yet been broken by the rough usage of passing troops or vagrants. The house was too far from others for the smoke from the chimney to be seen, and too commonly used for this sort of thing to invite suspicion in any case, so Jeanie and Gretta made a substantial meal, and went to bed on the floor, for mattresses, blankets, and most portable comforts had disappeared long ago.

Gretta did not sleep at once. Something about the desolate house which had not very long ago teemed with life and activity caught at her heart. What was it all about? Her father had explained, but she could not remember. She remembered bits of chance conversations at Lulworth:

"Those wicked creatures tipped all that valuable tea into the ocean, my dear."

"But that happened years ago."

"Yes—but fancy—only the other day—at Lexington ——"

"I assure you the King feels he must show a firm hand. The Queen remarked ——"

But all this told her nothing. She had been quite sure that the Colonials were savage and brutal till her father seemed to think otherwise. And now how account for the stories they told of the British occupation of Boston? She had seen the interior of the South Church, which had had its pews removed and its floor covered with earth and gravel for a riding school for Howe's cavalry; she had heard Harriet tell how the British quartermaster had rifled drapers' shops and private dwellings for linen; she had heard the name of Crean Brush—a name used in Boston, after he left it, to mean any unscrupulous robber; she had heard about the breaking into a neighbor's house of a band of British sailors and the thefts and ill treatment inflicted on its inmates. When Mistress Lawson found her in tears, having denied that these things were possible

and been given proof by the outraged Harriet, the good lady had sighed and admitted that they were true. "But it is war, my child, do not forget that. There have been instances of generosity, too. 'Twas the common soldiers and sailors who did not understand what they did, in part. John Hancock's house was untouched, though occupied by officers, and he president of Congress." Mistress Lawson had tried to comfort her so, yet the events described made the greater impression since they were admitted to be true by one so scrupulous and so kind.

War—was it indeed the devil's own method of dragging souls to hell, as the Quaker preacher had declared, or was it the glory and adventure, the righteous and heroic punishment of wrong-doing and vindicating of a splendid cause which she had been taught to regard it? Was it possible that both sides could be right, and both wrong? Could both armies be heroic and base, loyal, cruel, savage, magnificent, pathetic, tragic, generous, vindictive, selfish, and patriotic? It

was too difficult a question for a child to answer.

The quiet house made no answer, either, but perhaps she had appeased its spirit by her thoughts or by the little prayer she prayed before she went to sleep.

"Please, God, let people be kind to one another, and if ever I find my father again make me remember how it feels to be alone."

CHAPTER XV

Escape

It was the trampling feet and the sound of men's voices that woke Gretta, rudely, from a peaceful sleep. Jeanie, leaning over her, said: "Hush! We mun hide ourselves, lassie. 'Tis soldiers, and they be none of our ain."

Gretta leaped to her feet, her heart beating wildly. They could hear the stirring of the fire on the hearth and the laughter of men. To judge by the sound, there must be at least four or five of them.

They gathered together their belongings in silence and, listening at every step, crept down the creaking stairs. To reach the barn where the horses were was their aim, and this they might have done in safety had not a derelict wheelbarrow, lying in the uncut

grass, tripped Gretta and caused her to fall heavily. Jeanie dropped to her side, but the grass was not long enough to hide them from the eyes of a Maine farmer, trained to soldiering in the forests against crafty Indians. It was such a man who came to the kitchen door and saw the two figures crouched among ox-eyed daisies and goldenrod.

"Hi!" he called in surprise. "What's all this?"

Gretta got up, and Jeanie, ready to fight or run, as the case might demand, stood beside her.

"If you please," Gretta said, frowning at Jeanie, "we are only on our way to join our friends at Salem. Will you let us go?"

"Wal, why not?" the man inquired. "Nobody's stopping ye. There's the road."

"But our horses are in the barn," Gretta explained, made unwary by his mildness.

It was indeed the wrong thing to say. If Gretta had known the scarcity of horses, and their value to men who have traveled some hundreds of miles on foot to get home after

a term of serving in the army, she would not have mentioned them.

"Oh—ho! Not so fast, little lady," said the man. "Horses!" He called over his shoulder: "Here's a gal with horses, friends. What do you say to that?"

"Don't you try to play off any of your jokes on us, Ben," another man answered, but he came to the door, too.

"She says she's got them," the first man asserted.

"Gang!" whispered Jeanie. "There's a back door to the barn. Gang! Find your way to Marblehead and I'll follow. I can deal with them better if ye're awa'. Gang!

"Will ye pay me for them, sirs?" asked Jeanie. "They're not so very grand, but they're horseflesh, sure enough. One is lame in twa legs and t'other is short in the wind, but they are guid eno' for twa females. My dear"—to Gretta—"fetch out the beasties for the gentlemen."

Gretta went to the barn, followed in a leisurely way by the first soldier, who amused

himself by copying Jeanie's pronunciation. Once within the doors, the child ran straight to the horse which she guessed to be the faster of the two. He was bridled, but not saddled. She did not wait for anything, but rolled her skirt around her waist and mounted astride. The horse, fresh from his feed, reared. The back door of the barn was partly broken; she put him through the opening, grazing her leg as she did so, and turned his head toward the road.

"Hi! Stop there, you vixen!" shouted the surprised soldier.

"We'll shoot!" threatened another.

Indeed, a shot rang out almost at the same moment, but Gretta rode on with clenched teeth and eyes that looked neither to right nor to left.

She had chosen her horse at random, and now she knew that she was being followed. Between the gallop, gallop, of her own horse's feet came the gallop, gallop, of others far behind. Far behind, but nearer than they were, still nearer, and she could hear a man's

voice calling, "Stop, or I shoot," but she could not stop, for the horse had taken the bit in his teeth. It seemed that both horse and man meant to kill her. Shots rang out and whistled above her head.

Just then, her eyes blinded by tears, despair in heart, she saw that another rider was approaching from the opposite direction. She rode on, clinging blindly to the mare's long mane, and now the newcomer had halted and drawn his musket. Gretta hid her face in horror. They were shooting around her. Her shoulder stung. She was hit. Her horse galloped on unhurt, but some one was riding at her side.

"Gretta, Gretta are you hurt? There is blood on your arm!"

She looked up at that and saw Denis's pale face. "Are you hurt?" he asked, his voice shaking.

She smiled a little. "I don't think so," she answered. "It stings, but it is only my shoulder. What have you done, Denis?"

"I've winged the bird," Denis quickly re-

plied, "and we'd better get away from these shores, Gretta. For if 'tis discovered 'twill go hard with us. By his look he was one of these militia men that are leaving the Continentals in thousands, their time being up. But where is Jeanie?"

Gretta told him. "But, Denis, we can't leave that man if he is wounded. It's a lonely road."

"We must leave him," Denis answered. "Gretta, they would hang me to that tree in a minute for less than I've done."

"But I could go back."

"Do you think I'll leave you? No. I was anxious and rode from Marblehead to meet you. We can be out of this country on the night tide if we are cautious."

"But—Jeanie! Oh, what shall I do? Denis, I believe you saved my life."

"I don't. He'd never have hurt you except by accident. He wanted the horse, and by all laws of war he had a right to it. But he'd have stopped us from getting away, so I had to stop him. Let me see that shoulder."

Denis cut away the stuff of her frock neatly and disclosed the wound. It was only a scratch, he said. When he had bathed it with spring water they remounted and rode on.

But Gretta was weary and heartsore. To leave Jeanie—and to leave a wounded man—to ride on because if they did not Denis might be caught and hung—this was war, the side of war a mere girl might know. If this was so, what was her father enduring, fighting at the front? Her shoulder stung and hurt her, but she did not care.

When at last they reached the sea its spaces looked so clean and healing that she longed to be out upon it, and to sleep with the sound of its eternal music in her ears.

Alas for Gretta! There were sorrow and discouragement enough for her yet, although this wish was fulfilled before another night had passed.

The little town of Marblehead smelled of fish and salt water. At nightfall they entered it, and left their horses at an inn that leaned

over the water, one window, like a wary eye, alight on the side of the town. They dared not delay, and this was well, for the fisherman who lounged beside his wherry on the untidy beach told them in a taciturn whisper that he had nearly given them up. He rowed them out to a fishing-smack, rising and falling innocently on a gentle swell, and they clambered aboard.

"This young lady is greatly fatigued," Denis said to the man who came toward them. "Can she have a cabin at once?"

Indeed, Gretta's head was reeling, and but for the Captain's arm she would have fallen. There was no more talk that night, and there were no more adventures, either, and when she awoke it was full midday and Denis was standing beside her with her breakfast—a mackerel freshly caught and sizzling in its own fat, and a cup of steaming tea. The little craft was pitching giddily, and recovering with a buoyant glee which was her skipper's idea of perfect motion.

Gretta's spirits matched the day, for were

they not sailing at a great speed toward her father and her own people? Surely, if this wind continued it would not be long before they reached Staten Island, wherever that might be. Even her sore shoulder did not hurt her so much when she thought of that. When she had made her toilet and scrambled on to the deck to rejoin Denis, she was surprised to see that his face was dark and that he looked at her as if asking pardon for something.

"What is it?" she asked, laying a hand on his arm. "Oh, Denis, we'll soon be there now."

"Soon enough—and what then?" he asked. "Oh, Gretta, I wish ——"

"Why"—she paused aghast—"why once we're with the British army on Staten Island ——"

"We're not going to Staten Island," said poor Denis. "The Captain has changed his mind!"

CHAPTER XVI

A Battle in a Cornfield

THE skipper had changed his mind. The waters around New York were swarming with American privateers, and he had been alarmed by lurid tales of the treatment meted out to crews of vessels used in the King's service. He steered for Halifax and waited there until incoming ships brought better news.

The little town was dreary and uncomfortable, and Gretta was impatient to be with her father. Refugees from Boston, who had preferred exile in the barren land to persecution for their principles at home, told her depressing stories of injustice and hardship. She could not help remembering similar stories wherein Americans were the victims and loyalists the villains.

Some one had received letters from her friend, Colonel Campbell, who was still imprisoned at Concord. He said that he was kept in a windowless and filthy room, fed wretchedly, and treated like a common criminal.

It was a happy day when the skipper agreed to set out for Staten Island once more, induced by promises of high payment for articles which he would bring back with him. He expected a quick passage favored by the southwest wind.

But the southwest wind did not blow. His Majesty's warships, lying off Long Island shores, remained where they were for lack of it. Instead, gales from the north assailed them, and the night of August 26th found the little craft half disabled, beaten hither and yon, in the waters off Sandy Hook. The pilot had lost his bearings, and when the keel of the ship ground into a hidden sand reef he had only the vaguest knowledge of their position. The wind still blew and the ship lay over on her side.

"'Tis the Long Island coast, they say," Denis told Gretta, who shivered beside him on the lower deck, clinging to a rail lest a movement of the ship should fling her into the sea. "The Captain says they'll have to scuttle the ship and get away in boats if she's not broken up by morning, for the rebels hold Long Island. Gretta, we'd better take his offer and be rowed to shore. She'll never last the night." The vessel groaned like a living thing as a movement of tide and wave sent her over to starboard. "No harm will come to you, anyway. We'll find a farmer who will smuggle us across to Staten Island, maybe, when the weather changes. Will you come?"

Gretta looked at the dark waters, lighted by foam and sulphurous light when a wave struck the ship or distant land. She thought of a return to the life of an exile, the bitter taste of the charity of enemies. But what could they do?

"Yes, we had better go," she agreed.

She gathered together a bundle of her clothes and was lowered into a boat. Denis

followed her. The sailors pulled away from the ship toward the dim line which was land. They found themselves within the shelter of a bay, and landed easily on a sloping beach. The boat drew out to sea as they turned away toward the sleeping country.

Darkness was almost solid about them, but shadows were blacker than other shadows and they could see their way step by step.

"We'll walk uphill till we find a road," whispered Denis. "Then we are certain to come across a house sooner or later. It is too cold to sit down. Come, Gretta, give me your hand."

Denis's judgment proved sound. They stumbled on a well-traveled road before they had walked far, and turned into it, trying to cheer each other by such prophecies as "There'll be a house around the next corner, I should say," or, "We're sure to come on a loyalist farmer who'll see us to Staten Island," or, "Perhaps this is Staten Island, after all."

But the lonely blackness and the wind,

still beating in from the sea, their own weariness and chagrin soon silenced them, and they plodded on because there seemed nothing else to do.

Just as Gretta was about to drop down on the roadside and say she could walk no farther, Denis put a hand on her arm. "Hush!" he cautioned her. "Listen!" They paused, holding each other by the hand. From the road behind them, between the gusts of wind, came clearly the sound of marching feet.

Denis drew Gretta away from the road into a thicket. They could hear the rumble of guns being drawn over the uneven surface of the road, and presently the low voice of an officer giving a command. Now the leading lines were opposite them, a moving blotch against the sky line. Some one in the ranks coughed, and some one else growled a reproof. The marching feet passed on; guns rumbled and rattled after them; more marching feet; then the cry of a hare and a fresh onslaught of wind on branches of trees, and silence.

"Gretta," Denis whispered, "they were British soldiers. I've watched the Continentals march and they never march like that. There wasn't a man out of step. And did you hear that voice? They were British, I tell you. Gretta, I believe there's going to be a battle. They were so quiet. I believe we're just in time. Shall we follow them?"

Gretta seized his arm. "Oh, Denis," she cried, "come along! If they are our men and there's going to be a battle, we must see it! Come quickly!"

They stumbled out into the road again and ran until Gretta fell into a rut. They slowed down to a soberer pace then, but they had gained on the soldiers, for they could hear their "tramp-tramp" far ahead of them on the road.

"What time do you suppose it is?" Gretta asked, munching a ship's biscuit as she walked.

"It had gone six bells before we left the ship," Denis answered. "It must be twelve o'clock at least. What's that?"

A volley of shot had broken the tranquillity of the night.

Denis led Gretta to a fence beside the road, lifted her over, and climbed over himself. The shooting, repeated, seemed farther away, and they ventured to creep forward, using the fence as a guide.

"Advance pickets, perhaps," Denis whispered. "Come along."

Presently they came to a hedge of thorn. Looking for a place to climb through, they were confronted by a man who rose from his shelter. He peered down into their faces and, taking Denis by the shoulder, asked, "Who are you—quick? Are you from the farm?"

"We—we're going to the farm," Denis stammered.

"Tell 'em the British are marching in force. Get a word to the Yellow Mills. Don't let 'em send reinforcements this way. Protect their left. Hurry up, youngsters. It's life or death." He helped them through the hedge and they heard him make off in another direction.

"Must be a farm here, then," muttered Denis. "The British on the march in force. If I can find that farm, I'll leave you there."

"Oh, Denis, you wouldn't!" cried Gretta.

Except for an occasional volley of small shot, quiet reigned. And now they knew they must be in the neighborhood of a farmhouse, for cornfields waved about them and they came on a potato patch. They were cold and hungry, and when they blundered on the path to the farmhouse door they turned into it without speaking.

A light showed in a window and their knock was quickly answered by a tall woman in a calico gown, who stared at them in amazement.

"Bless me!" she said, throwing open the door. "And who be you?"

They must have presented a sorry appearance. Gretta's frock was torn and wet, her hair had come undone and hung loosely under an ill-used bonnet, her shoes were in tatters, and she had scratched her face in getting through the hedge. Denis was in a worse

plight, for in addition to everything else he had a bruise on his eye which was beginning to swell.

"I was expecting a wounded soldier," said the woman. "I didn't expect a pair of gypsies." She looked sharply at Gretta, who walked with dignity into the warm room and sat down.

"I'm not a gypsy," she said, faintly. "I'm shipwrecked." It was the shortest explanation she could think of, and it served, for just at that moment the firing came again and the woman went to the door to listen.

"'Tis only pickets," she murmured. "They are driving them back. The bridge over the creek has been burned. If any of the rebels come this way they'll be caught, sure as fate. Ah, well, you might as well have a bite and sup and a dry shift, though I've naught so elegant as this." She handled the stuff of Gretta's gown in surprise.

While the good woman prepared a meal for them, Gretta haltingly told her story, and afterward, warmed and fed, she dropped

asleep by the fire, unawakened by the fitful firing that continued throughout the night.

Daybreak woke her, however. There was a red and angry glare in the sky and some great sound had shivered the silence of the kitchen where the ashes paled beneath the firedogs on the hearth. She sat up, startled and ill at ease. Denis had gone, the farmer's wife was nowhere to be seen. A cannon thundered brazenly across the peaceful fields, and another cannon replied. The red sun lit a morning of battle.

She jumped up and looked out of the window. Wooded hills were on her right, plains stretched away seaward on her left. Between them were the farm lands, and, far away before her, something that looked like a great marsh. A grove of trees interrupted the view, and Gretta determined to see what they hid. She caught up her cloak and ran out at the open door, through the farmyard, where cows, waiting to be milked, watched her with mild surprise, and was among the trees on a

little knoll, whence she could look out on the whole valley.

This was what she had come to see!

On the opposite hill was ranged what seemed to her an army. The ranks stood in close formation, standards waving above, buff-and-scarlet uniforms glowing in the sunlight. On another hillock, separated from them by a valley of waving corn and green meadow, were soldiers partly hidden by trees and hedges. Gretta knew that the buff-and-scarlets could not belong to the British. She could see the Stars and Stripes among the flags that floated over their heads. Those others were British, then, and they were firing their cannon, but the regiments opposite to them neither changed nor wavered.

She made no account of time as she lay among the trees. If the cannonade lasted hours or minutes she could not have told, but when Denis found her she was watching still, and just at that moment there came from another direction, a great bombardment which shook the world. As if this were

a signal, the British lines moved forward, red coats catching the light, brass accouterments shining. Cannon were dragged forward by straining men. The woods on their left spat fire. At last there was a movement in the bright lines on the hillside. They began to withdraw toward the swamp.

Gretta and Denis crept out of the grove on to the side of the rising ground. They heard firing everywhere, and suddenly from the hillside more troops gathered. A mounted officer rode among the buff-and-scarlet uniforms. The formation was broken. Here and there a man fell. Others retreated toward the swamps and could be seen struggling in the morass. A trumpet blew, desolately. Flashes of fire parted the smoke floating over the valley. Sometimes the two could see nothing for the murk of the guns. But Denis cried:

"'Tis our men, Gretta. Aye, and there's Highlanders among them." For they could see now that the scarlet-and-buffs were surrounded by those who pressed in from all sides. "How they fight!" cried Denis.

"There won't be a man left! Look, Gretta! They're driving the redcoats back!" And indeed it seemed for a moment that these brave rebels would win through, for the attacking soldiers drew back into the shelter of the wood.

It was only for a moment, and then they saw a whole body of Continentals making for the swamp, while what seemed a handful remained in a cornfield, guarding their retreat. Now the British were on them. Gretta saw the bayonets catch the sun, saw them quench the sunlight in the buff-and-scarlet. She saw men fall among the cornstalks and could not look away. She saw an officer break through the British ranks and ride toward the brigade advancing by another road.

"Hessians!" cried Denis. "See their caps!"

The battle in that cornfield lasted ten minutes, the histories say, and when the smoke drifted from the cornstalks the sky was still blue, the fields still green, and the water still purple in the bay, even though the Maryland lads who had borne their gay uniforms so

gallantly in the fight would go to war no more. They had lost the battle, but won the glory, and their great chief, who watched them die from the American works on the hill, cried out:

"What brave fellows I must lose this day!"

CHAPTER XVII

Friends and Enemies

A HAND fell on the collar of Denis and he was dragged to his feet.

"What in the name of all that's holy are you doing here?" demanded a harsh voice above him.

Gretta saw a big man, his uniform bright with new silver braid and white facings. He did not seem to have been doing much fighting, but behind him stood a group of disheveled rebels, quickly recognized by their flannel shirts and homespun breeches. They were part of Parson's Continental militia, captured earlier in the day, she heard later. Behind these grinned a cheerful sergeant and a dozen privates in British uniform, herding the prisoners with good-natured watchfulness.

There would have been nothing alarming in this but for the face of the officer, which was highly colored and handsome, and to which Gretta took an immediate and lasting dislike.

Denis stuttered in his surprise and Gretta spoke up.

"Please let Denis go at once!" she cried. "How dare you!"

The officer turned to her.

"Ho—ho!" he remarked. "A spitfire, eh? Well, you are both in custody, caught in a suspicious situation, spying on our movements. You will have to explain yourselves to the commander-in-chief. Where do you belong? That farm there?" He pointed over his shoulder.

Denis tried to explain, but again stammered nervously, and the officer looked him over in contempt.

"After you are shot as a spy, young man," he remarked, "you'll be useful as a scarecrow."

Gretta's white face brought back Denis's faculties.

"We are no spies," Denis said, quietly, "but loyal British subjects. We have been unlucky enough to be wrecked on our way to Staten Island, and driven to this coast instead. It was pure accident that we witnessed the battle. We had no idea that the royal army was in Long Island."

The officer laughed.

"A likely tale!" he scoffed. "I've a mind to shoot you offhand, as I've power to do with suspicious persons." He fingered the pistol in his belt suggestively, as if he were enjoying himself.

The prisoners had flung themselves on the ground, indifferent, through weariness, to all that passed. The soldiers leaned on their muskets. No one seemed to care what happened, and this big, splendid officer had a cruel light in his eye. But Denis lifted his head. "My story is true, sir, and I must ask to be taken before the proper authorities to explain myself, as you do not believe me."

The officer laughed.

"The 'proper authorities' are busy enough as it is." He mimicked Denis's tone. "Sergeant, search the prisoner."

This performance was executed with thoroughness.

"Now I fear we must search the young lady."

Gretta clenched her fists. "If you do," she asserted, "I'll kill you! And so will my father. He's a Captain in the Forty-second Highlanders and he'll kill you with his skean dhu. And so will my cousin, Amory Lathrop. He'd *like* to do it."

Some one laughed, but the officer did not laugh. He turned politely to Gretta. "You terrify me," he said. "But may I ask if you are actually a cousin of Mistress Lathrop?"

"Of course I am!" cried the indignant Gretta. She followed the glance of the man, which traveled significantly over the calico gown lent by the farmer's wife. "And if it's clothes you judge by"—her voice held infinite scorn—"you'll find my own in that

farmhouse. I judge by clothes, too," she continued, "and you seem to have kept yours very clean, although I believe there has been a battle."

The man laughed. "A spitfire—I said it!" he chuckled. "Well, young lady, I've been teasing you both a bit to find out your mettle, and I've done it. Let us go to that farmhouse and see what can be had in the way of food. But in the meantime let me introduce myself. Cecil Harding, major of the Royal Americans, and a friend of the Lathrop family and a humble admirer of the lovely Mistress Juliet. Come, let us be friends. Forgive a weary soldier his little game."

This sudden change of tone made Gretta like him no better, although she felt weak with relief as Major Harding ordered Denis to be released and they began to walk toward the farm. She hated the way he spoke to the farmer's wife, and the pleasure he seemed to take in rifling her most valuable stores. She even hated the skill with which he won the confidence of the guileless Denis, leading

him on to tell his story and Gretta's, and listening with a great show of interest and sympathy. She hated his civility to herself and she hated herself when she found that she was yielding to it. It was good, after the buffeting of the last months, to have some one make everything smooth. The major seemed to have a knack of getting what he wanted. A splendid breakfast came first. A gig and horse appeared as if by magic, and Gretta was wrapped snugly in a gray army blanket, for rain had begun to fall and the day was chilly and dreary. The major rode beside her until they came to the rough camp gathered about the headquarters of Sir William Howe. They were admitted at the door of a tent over which a golden standard, ornamented with griffins' heads, flew. Here she was brought into the actual presence of the powerful general and looked up into a face which might have been coarse but for the high-bred kindliness which distinguished it.

He turned from the secretary to whom

he had been dictating a report, and smiled at Gretta and Denis as he listened to the story which Major Harding, in repeating, made far more picturesque and interesting than its hero or heroine had done. When it was finished he congratulated the pair on a safe ending to their adventures.

"I think highly of your father," he told Gretta; and to Denis he said, "And you, young man? What do *you* want?"

"I want to join the army," Denis answered.

"Good! Want a slap at the rebels, eh?"

Denis flushed.

"I don't think so, sir," he stammered.

"Want to cut a dash in uniform?" the general laughed and glanced at Gretta.

"No, sir."

"Then why be a soldier?"

"Because"—Denis looked up, aware that he was being laughed at—"because I want to know what it feels like."

"Eh?" the general looked surprised, and a bit suspicious. "Well, well, we'll see to it.

Major Harding, attend to these youngsters. Give them all facilities for reaching Mistress Lathrop's house. But before that find this young lady's father if you can." He turned to his secretary. "Locate the Forty-second Highlanders." He shot the words over his shoulder.

The meeting with her father was a brief but joyful interlude in that strange day. He came to her, riding through the rain, and, flinging himself from his horse, met her at the door. He had no time to lose. His men were stationed before the American works and he must be among them. To win what was believed to be a great victory, and to find his little daughter at the end of it, were a reward for all his anxiety and suffering on her account. Gretta heard him thank Major Harding warmly for his assistance and commend her to his care. He wrote a brief line to his cousin, Mistress Lathrop, and gave it to Gretta, before he left her, and rode away in the cold rain.

A few hours later they stood at the door of

a wooden house overlooking a quiet street. When they were admitted, and a lady of dignity and beauty rose from her spinning-wheel to welcome them, Gretta knew that she had come home. Cousin Bernicia read the Captain's letter, and welcomed Gretta with all the warmth the child had missed so long, and Juliet, when she came, seconded her mother's hospitality. Juliet was like her mother, though slighter, not so proud, and sadder, it seemed. When she curtsied to Major Harding, Gretta thought her expression stiffened, but she was kind to Denis.

"We have Major Harding to thank for finding Gretta and taking care of her," Mistress Lathrop told her daughter.

"We are obliged to Major Harding." Juliet curtsied again, but her voice was cold.

"I wish it had been a greater service," declared Major Harding, earnestly, and he looked so handsome, so deferential, and so impossible to resist that Gretta hated him more ardently than ever.

"But what of Denis?" Gretta asked.

"Trust Denis to me," the major replied. "He shall be well billeted and I've no doubt I shall get him enlisted before long."

"You will remain and dine with us?" Cousin Bernicia graciously invited them.

Major Harding glanced at Juliet, who said, stiffly, "Pray do."

"I think"—he answered Cousin Bernicia, and Gretta found herself feeling sorry for him, which was the last thing she intended —"I think these family reunions are best enjoyed in private. Perhaps I may be allowed to pay my respects another time. And then we could talk of your son's commission, could we not?"

A darkening of Cousin Bernicia's glance warned him of trouble, for he said his adieux quickly and went away, taking Denis with him.

Almost as soon as the door had closed on them it was thrown open again, and a tall man entered swiftly, his face troubled and anxious. He looked at Gretta, and coming to her, with a momentary smile, kissed her

A Lady of Dignity and Beauty Rose to Welcome Them

hand. It was Amory, grown tall and manly, but she had no time to speak before he turned to his sister:

"Juliet, will you come?" he asked.

She reached behind her for the support of the chair by which she stood.

"Amory! Is he dead?" she cried. "Tell me now."

"A prisoner, and wounded. I can take you to him. Dinah has your cloak." The black servant stood behind them, holding a warm wrap.

Juliet went without a word. There was a sound of wheels and they were gone. But Cousin Bernicia stood like stone, not speaking. At last she turned to Gretta, who had shrunk, frightened and bewildered, into a corner.

"Come, my dear," she said in a voice from which the life had fled. "You are hungry and tired. Dinah shall look after you."

It was a silent and uncomfortable meal that Gretta shared with her cousin. Perfunctory questions and answers were exchanged,

but Cousin Bernicia was listening, Gretta thought, for the sound of returning wheels, and so was she. The evening passed with old magazines and knitting, and bedtime came at last.

But Gretta could not sleep. Where was Jeanie? Who was dying? Would Juliet soon come back? Would she see her father to-morrow? Why did such dreadful things happen? God could stop it all in a moment if He liked. Why didn't He?

Once Cousin Bernicia came in, but Gretta shut her eyes and pretended to be asleep. She knew that Cousin Bernicia would not be able to answer any of her questions except one, and that one she would not wish to answer.

Much later she heard tiptoed steps, and whispers outside her door. It opened and Juliet entered quietly, shading the candle with her hand so that Gretta might not wake. She undressed, and knelt down to say her prayers. Gretta, listening, thought she might cry, but she did not. After she got into the big bed beside Gretta she lay quite still; but

Gretta listened, unable to sleep, and at last she heard Juliet turn on her side and breathe out the faintest, whispered "Oh" of a person who is in pain and can bear it in silence no longer.

Gretta turned over and threw her arms around the other girl without saying anything. She felt the slender body stiffen in her arms and then relax suddenly as a storm of tears wet the pillow where the two heads lay. "Oh—Gretta—little Gretta—I can't bear it —I can't—oh—I can't, I can't!"

CHAPTER XVIII

Denis and Amory

WHEN Gretta woke next morning her cousin's place was empty, but she found a sheet of paper pinned to the quilt. It had these words written upon it in a fine slanting hand: "Dear little cousin, I thank you."

For a long time the incidents of that night were not mentioned between them, and it was Amory who told Gretta what had happened. Before the war Juliet had been betrothed to his own best friend, a young Maryland cadet, but their betrothal could not be made public on account of their youth. The war came, the lover threw in his lot with the rebels, and now the romance was ended at Gowanus Creek, where the ground was gay with the buff-and-scarlet uniforms of the fallen.

It may have been a relief to them all to have Gretta in the house at this time. The three members of the family were separated from one another, but they could all talk to Gretta. She understood why Juliet could not turn to her mother for sympathy, but she did not know at first why Amory Lathrop should seem so ill-at-ease.

Amory had grown older and graver. He was a man. She longed to talk to him as before, but she could not, and this made her sad.

The loyalist colony was relieved by the British success on Long Island. Food came in cartloads. Milch cows were brought over in barges and there was plenty of milk and butter. Those who had thronged to Staten Island at the coming of the British were repaid for their patience, which had been near giving out, for the British soldiers had showed little discrimination in plundering the farms of foe and partisan alike.

Denis often came to see them, and he

used to read to them in the evenings while they knitted or picked lint.

He was full of Major Harding's praises, and Cousin Bernicia welcomed that officer warmly whenever he joined their little group. But Juliet made excuses to avoid him, and if she remained in the room while he exchanged gossip with Cousin Bernicia, she occupied herself with her work and spoke only when she must. One day Gretta heard her say to her mother: "It's no use. I hate him. Why should he pursue me so?"

"You can scarcely call it pursuit," her mother answered. "He merely waits."

"It is horrible to have him wait!" Juliet cried, passionately. "Tell him not to, mother," she besought.

Cousin Bernicia spoke coldly.

"You will feel differently one day," she said.

Captain Cameron, coming in just then, received a warm welcome.

"Will you ask Juliet if she wishes to hear how Sterling's men fought and died?" he

said to Gretta one day. "I was there with my Highlanders and I know."

Juliet gave an eager "Yes" when Gretta whispered the question, and she came away from that interview with Captain Cameron, her head lifted proudly and her eyes bright with unshed tears.

The early September days were bright and clear, the air like wine. Gretta was happy to be again where she might talk freely of the people and places she loved. She shared Cousin Bernicia's excitement when a letter came from the elder son, Vincent, who was in the north with Burgoyne. There was a stir of hopefulness in the community, for the taking of New York was only a matter of days and, after that, life would be more nearly normal and complete victory in sight. So said everyone. They could see the British ships sailing, unhindered, up the Hudson, and soon they could see the movement in New York which meant that the Continental army was making ready for retreat.

Gretta felt anxious about Jeanie, but Jam-

sie, the Captain said, was awaiting her with confidence.

"They'll not keep Jeanie wheer she wouldna be," he asserted. "She'll soon find a way, dinna doot it, sir! And then 'tis wedded we'll be the day, and no more shilly-shally." Jamsie was servant to Captain Cameron, and took care of his kit and person with ferocious zeal.

One evening Denis walked into the parlor where the Lathrop ladies and Gretta and Amory were sitting, and Gretta gave a cry of surprise, for he was in the uniform of a private of the Sixtieth Regiment of Royal Americans. His long figure had a new dignity as he looked at Gretta, rather wistfully, for approval.

"Oh, Denis, you are wonderful!" she cried.

"I found it was the quickest way to get into the army," he told her. "I kept it a secret to surprise you."

When she looked around Mrs. Lathrop had dropped her sewing in her lap and was

looking, not at Denis, but at her son, and he was returning her glance, his head lifted. He got up and left the room.

"I apologize for Amory," his mother spoke quietly. "I congratulate you, Denis."

Later, Gretta, moved by an impulse, slipped out of the room and found Amory sitting on the steps in the chilly September starlight. His head was buried in his arms. She laid a hand on his shoulder, and he, seeming to know whose hand it was, laid his over it. So they sat, Gretta not understanding anything except that he was so good, so brave, so handsome, and so unhappy, and that war was a cruel thing and made even mothers cruel sometimes.

"I don't want you to be miserable," she said, childishly.

"I know you don't—and—I don't want to be." She knew that he was smiling ruefully.

She did not ask questions. She knew better than that.

"But Mistress Lawson said"—she stopped

and repeated the words with care—" 'A big heart, a strong soul, an understanding mind —these come to no one save by one sure way —the way of suffering.' I should like to have a big heart, a strong soul, and an understanding mind. Would not you, Amory?"

"I believe you've got them, Gretta dear," he answered. "But you are cold," for she was shivering. "Go back and admire Denis in his uniform. He deserves it. He's a good fellow. I can't go back tonight."

"I don't want to leave you," Gretta said.

"And I don't want to leave you," cried Amory, "nor my mother and sister, nor my home. My God! What shall I do!"

He was crying, his head in her lap, but in a moment he pulled himself together. "Never mind me. I don't know what I'm saying. Gretta, you shouldn't have such an understanding mind! Go in like a good girl or some one will come, and I can't bear that just now." He took her hand, pressed it gently, and put it down. "We're friends," he

said, "for good or ill, whatever comes! Promise."

"I promise," Gretta cried, and her heart sang that at last she and Amory were friends again, even if he had grown to be a man and she was still a little girl.

She went back to the parlor, where Denis's glance rested on the doorway as if waiting for her.

"Everyone says General Howe is making a mistake in waiting so long to attack. The Continentals are discouraged and demoralized. 'Tis our chance to strike, and here we sit. As for the fleet, if they had had other orders Washington would never have made good his retreat and we should have captured the whole army."

Cousin Bernicia and Juliet listened respectfully. They were tearing old linen into bandages, for more fighting was expected, and the shudder of the fabric as it parted punctuated Denis's remarks.

But when Denis said good-night to Gretta he dropped his martial air.

"I don't like it," he told her passionately. "I hate it all. I hate rising to a bugle that wakes hundreds to the same thing! I hate eating with my fellow recruits. I hate drill. I hate guns. I hate swords, and everything else a soldier ought to like and feel at home with, and I shan't like being an officer any better except that I shall have a horse. Why, Gretta, the army is brutal, though it's generous and kind and childlike too. Did you ever see a man flogged? Well, I have, and I've seen the coat a private soldier cast off, lying on the ground, and you couldn't tell which was the lining and which was the outside. He had put it on after being flogged, you see. Sometimes I dream I've done something awful and they are going to give me a thousand lashes. I'm so absent-minded I will do something awful some day."

"No, you won't, Denis," cried Gretta, tears in her eyes.

"I wish I were back in Limerick," he mused, "with a peat bog on one side of me and loamy fields on the other and a misty

Irish sky above my head. I'd wish to be alone, my mother waiting tea for me in the old house, and my mare, Kathleen, between my knees. And maybe you, Gretta. I'd like to show you my home in Limerick."

"Poor Denis!" was all Gretta could say. She had not dared to say, "Poor Amory!"

"Nay, not poor Denis," he answered, "for 'tis all life, and I'm greedy for life, Gretta. 'Tis strange how life never tastes so strong and splendid as when you drink it out of the cup of death. War teaches you quicker than peace, and teaches true. And one thing it teaches is its own uselessness and folly."

"But, oh, I wish you weren't in Major Harding's regiment!" Gretta exclaimed.

The fighting began again on Friday, the 13th of September, and on Sunday, the 15th, the British were in full possession of New York. The good news was brought to the Lathrops by Denis himself, who had been stationed with some reserves to man one of the vacated posts on the Long Island shore. He said they could see the redcoats swarming

up the banks, and the previous fire from the ships had been terrific. But the American garrison had run away, by all accounts, and it was said that George Washington had nearly committed suicide from pure rage.

The next day, however, and the following one, had retrieved the reputation of the Colonials, for they had fought valiantly, and the officers had performed miracles of courage.

"And my father?" cried Gretta.

"The Forty-second Highlanders were at Haarlem Heights. We shall have news soon," Denis answered, warily.

So, like others, she had to wait, and news came at last early Tuesday morning when the family were sitting down to breakfast. It was the Captain himself who walked in, in high spirits, though he wore his arm in a sling. He said he was hungry as a bear and hugged Gretta in a rather bear-like way.

He told them anecdotes of the battle—how Jamsie had followed him about with a leg of lamb which he partly cooked three

times and finally finished and served forty-eight hours after the first attempt; how a herd of cattle had charged and scattered a company of dragoons which had routed twice their number of infantry half an hour before; how he had met a runaway rebel sergeant being drubbed by his angry officer who had lost his pistol; how he had taken both prisoners forthwith; how, in graver vein, his own lot of Highlanders had been all but surrounded and might have been captured but for the timely arrival of the Jagers under Colonel von Dunop.

He was still talking, his arm around Gretta, and his plate replenished with ham and eggs for the third time, when old Dinah came waddling in with a letter on a salver.

"It is for Mrs. Lathrop, her own self. A colored boy, he brung it. They's no answer, he say."

Cousin Bernicia looked down at the square of paper, hesitated, took it, rose suddenly and left the room.

Juliet looked after her uncertainly. The

Captain pushed away his plate and folded his arm more tightly around Gretta. They all waited in silence until Cousin Bernicia returned, the letter in her hand.

"Amory—my son—has joined the rebels," she said. "Never mention his name to me again!"

CHAPTER XIX

New York at Last

JULIET gave the letter to Captain Cameron to read.

DEAREST MOTHER [it ran], "I cannot, cannot wait longer. I have enlisted in the Continental army. I do so now because no one can say I chose the winning side. Today—Friday the thirteenth—when the Republicans are running away from the Royal army, I select as the day to become a citizen of the American States.

It is no use to try to explain. If my father had been alive, who knows which side he would have taken? I know I could never fight against these brothers of mine. You will say I can find it in my heart to fight against my blood-brother? Yes, but these are brothers of spirit. I believe what they believe—hope what they hope. I cannot withhold any longer my arm from the cause in which my heart is already enlisted.

Dear mother, will you still believe I love you, and my family, and all I loved before, and that the heart I give to my country is a broken heart, after all?

Your devoted son,
AMORY LATHROP.

"Oh, poor mother! poor mother!" Juliet cried. "It will kill her."

The Captain shook his head. "No, it won't do that," he answered, "and 'tis hard on Amory, too. He's a brave lad, even if he is wrong-headed. Why, Gretta, don't cry!"

For Gretta was crying wildly.

She had not expected this. It had not seemed possible. She knew, now, how splendid a person Amory had seemed to her. How often she had thought of him dressed as a British officer, equipped with his sword and laced hat, his spurs and powder-horn. And now he would wear sober blue and she would never see him again.

Outside, a group of soldiers were marching by, singing. The words of the chorus of their song drifted back to her:

"Marching on, dreaming of you.
Marching on, loyal and true!
Friendships must sever,
Parting forever
Red coats and blue!"

The tune was a swinging, haunting one and Gretta listened while the verse was sung through and the chorus came again, faintly, so that only in memory could she hear the words:

"Parting forever
Red coats and blue."

That was war. Parting—Juliet and her lover, Jeanie and Jamsie, Denis and his mother, and now Amory, parted from them all!

The two girls tried to comfort each other and Gretta told Juliet, little by little, all that had happened to her, for it diverted them both from their present troubles. Juliet liked to hear about Mr. Jimmy. "I think he must be a wonderful man," she said.

The house seemed strange and empty without Amory, and sometimes they talked

of him secretly, though his name might not be spoken aloud.

"I knew that he believed America should be free," Juliet said. "He had heard Franklin speak, and Adams."

"Father says if we lose the war, Americans would be like any other foreigners, not rebels any more. But we can't lose the war, can we, Juliet?"

"Oh no."

"And what will they do to people like Amory if we win?"

But Juliet could only shake her head again.

There was little time to think in the days that followed. All loyalists, able to do so, intended to winter in New York. Cousin Bernicia gave orders to Dinah and Uncle Bob, the colored manservant, to procure barrels and packing-cases, and set them to work, under her vigilant eye, to pack all the silver and china and household goods, "for," she said to Juliet, "we have to think of Vincent, who may come home on leave when Burgoyne takes Albany."

Major Harding was quietly helpful and efficient at this time, engaging horses when no one else seemed able to do so and procuring comforts for the ladies as if by magic.

Captain Cameron had been with them all this time, but he was eager to rejoin his regiment, and, although his wound still troubled him, he said good-by to them three days later.

"Shall we be able to go soon?" asked Gretta.

"Not till I send word. I must be sure it is safe. I will look for a suitable house. In fact" —he turned to Cousin Bernicia—"I think I know of the very one, on Dyer Street not far from Saint Paul's Church, and near Broadway. It has a pleasant garden, and is the property of a gentleman who sailed for England at the outbreak of the war to avoid rebel persecution. I understand it has been damaged very little. I will inspect it myself and let you know."

Cousin Bernicia thanked him; he waved his bonnet and was gone.

Denis had gone into camp, and the house

seemed very quiet in spite of the litter of sawdust and straw attendant on the business of packing.

It was a few nights later that Gretta was awakened by Juliet standing beside the bed, a candle in her hand.

"Get up, Gretta," she said. "Something terrible is happening. New York is on fire. Put on your clothes and we will go out. There are crowds of people on the shore."

Gretta stumbled to her feet and the two girls dressed themselves quickly, wrapping themselves in cloaks, for the nights were frosty and smelled of autumn.

As soon as they opened the door they could see the flames leaping in columns to the sky and ending there in an angry glow. They ran to the shore and stood with others gazing at the spectacle before them.

"Must be Trinity Church!" cried one as a flame, higher than others, streamed seaward on the wind. The whole western side of the town seemed to be burning.

"The rebels have done it," an old man

Gretta Was Awakened by Juliet Standing Beside the Bed

averred. "They said they'd do it and they've done it. I'd hang everyone of them to his own ceiling if I was Howe."

" 'Tis the rebels," growled the crowd.

"Maybe not," piped up a girl's voice. "Who knows? The army likes plunder well enough. Did not a trooper take mother's best ——"

She was silenced abruptly by a hand over her mouth.

"Do you not know better than to speak so?" her companion scolded. "Ye'd be ridden on a rail for less!"

"Aye, even those whose brothers are in the rebel army know enough to keep silence when they see that." A woman with streaming gray hair threw out an arm toward the flaming city.

Gretta turned indignantly, but Juliet did not show that she had heard the taunt.

"Never mind them, my dear." A neighbor patted Juliet's arm. " 'Tis well known your mother is a truer subject of His Gracious

Majesty than many who talk more of their loyalty."

Still Juliet did not speak.

"I wonder where my father is," Gretta whispered. "I wish he were here, and Denis, too." For some reason Gretta felt she had to take care of Denis.

Juliet slipped an arm through hers.

"Have you seen enough?" she asked. "Shall we go home?"

It was hard to sleep that night with that ugly light on the sky line. What was happening over there across the water? What ugly deeds and brave ones were taking place? Suppose the rebels had not done it? Who would believe them? Would innocent persons be punished? Amory was a rebel now—Amory was a rebel ——

Gretta fell asleep, and dreamed that Amory was being hung to a glass chandelier because he had burned New York.

The next day Captain Cameron came and told them all about it. The fire had begun in the lower part of the town and had spread

northwest, destroying nearly everything on the way. King's College, Trinity Church, many houses and buildings of importance, had gone, "And among them the house I had rented for you, Cousin Bernicia," the Captain ruefully told her. "I'll have to find another."

"Was anyone punished?" Cousin Bernicia demanded.

"I'm afraid a good many people were," answered Captain Cameron.

"Afraid?"

"Yes, afraid, since on an occasion like that there is no time or inclination to weigh evidence. The soldiers, and especially the sailors, did splendid work and risked their lives a million times in arresting the flames, but they claimed their reward of course. There's no stopping that."

The fire in New York delayed the Lathrop household in its removal to the town, but early in October they crossed the ferry, their goods on barges following them, and took up their residence on Wall Street. It was

Major Harding who had found them the very house they wanted, built pleasantly of brick, a flagged pavement before it, and a tiny garden in the rear.

"Later you may wish to move to more rural surroundings," he suggested. "There is a small estate not far from that of Mr. Murray the Quaker, but that is, of course, rather isolated and lonely for ladies."

"I prefer this," Cousin Bernicia answered. "I like to be in the center of things, and I can be of more use here."

Major Harding came and went as a matter of course in the little establishment. Each day made him a more familiar figure, and he performed frequent services for the ladies for which he seemed to require no thanks. Cousin Bernicia was his declared ally, but Juliet showed her aversion to him so plainly that even Gretta thought her unkind. The major seemed harmless enough, and Denis still adored him, although Denis's awkwardness and stupidity had attracted more than one sharp rebuff.

"I am always dropping things," sighed Denis, "and forgetting them," he added, ruefully.

They all liked New York. They liked the movement and the comfort and the sense of confidence that prevailed.

General Howe himself, settling down into comfortable winter quarters, seemed in no hurry to follow the beaten enemy. It was not until the 12th of October that a force was landed on Frog's Neck and the fleet set in motion. Fog made a thick veil for these operations and the anxious women waited in New York to hear the result.

But the anxiety of waiting was tempered with a revival of social life. Ladies came to drink tea with Cousin Bernicia, who received them graciously and talked freely of Vincent, fighting under Burgoyne, and not at all of Amory. Juliet sat over her needlework or rolled bandages or waited on her mother's friends. She even smiled upon the young officers who came to see them in the evenings, and once or twice she was persuaded to at-

tend an evening party, but Gretta, who slept beside her, knew that when she came home from such affairs, it was to weep into her pillow and sleep at last with unhappy dreams.

"If they would but leave me alone," she sighed. "I shall be old some day, and it will not matter then if I am quiet, and cannot laugh, or flirt behind my fan. Oh, Gretta, if I were only old now!"

"Do you never think of Amory?" Gretta asked once.

"Yes. I think of him. But he is fighting, and I envy him. If he is killed, I shall envy him then, too!"

Yet she did not show any of this by day when they worked and read together.

Captain Cameron came to see them after the victory of Chatterton Hill.

"We should be able to finish the campaign," he told them, "if General Howe will act quickly."

But this is what he did not do. Time was all the Colonials required, and time was what

they had. Denis, still a private, spoke freely. He had seen a little action in skirmishes with the rebels in Westchester and it seemed to have changed him. There was a new light in his eye, and he held himself like a man.

"I always thought I'd run away," he told Gretta. "I hate loud noises, and guns, and everything that makes you jump. But I didn't run away." Again he looked to her as if he wanted her to praise him, but it only made her want to cry.

"Of course you didn't, Denis," she said.

"Look what I've brought you." He undid a paper wrapping and showed her two beautifully bound books. The works of Daniel Defoe—author of *The True-born Englishman, etc.*

"But, Denis, you shouldn't. They must have cost lots of money."

"No." He shook his head. "A man was selling them in the street for two shillings."

Gretta took them. She had no books of her own, and these were beautiful. But inside the cover was the coat of arms of King's College.

"Look," she told Denis.

"I know," he answered. "The soldiers have pillaged all the libraries. You may as well have them. Somebody will."

Gretta frowned.

Then she said, "What's this?" For there was a piece of paper inside the book, scribbled over in Denis's writing.

"Oh, that's nothing," he said. "It's mine. I didn't know it was there." He tried to take it from her, but she snatched it back, and saw that it was a series of verses, much erased and altered, words scratched out and other words substituted. In short it was a composition of Denis's making, and Gretta saw now that there were familiar words in it:

Marching on . . .
Dreaming of you.

"Denis, did you make up that song?" she asked.

He nodded. "The loyalists wanted a song of their own, so I just wrote it for them. It's rubbish, but it swings, and that's what you

want; and a lot of them have had to part with their friends, you know."

It was during this time that Gretta received a long letter from her grandmother. Her portrait was being painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds and he was painting one of Lord Eastlake to accompany it. She had been to the play and had seen Garrick in "She Stoops to Conquer," but Garrick was retiring, positively, it was said. She had found a new lace-woman to take Jeanie's place, but she was not so clever as Jeanie and the sacrifice of that maid still inconvenienced Lady Eastlake. She hoped the campaign was progressing favorably, since she heard the German troops had sailed in great numbers and no doubt British headquarters would be quite gay, but she hoped that Captain Cameron would take care that Gretta made no public appearance at balls or routs until she was sixteen. Lady Eastlake would send a box of fashionable silks and brocades as soon as she knew where to send, but as the British had evacuated Bos-

ton she was in doubt about the address of the ladies Lathrop, to whom Gretta was to present her compliments, also to the charming boy, Amory.

A postscript added:

I met the Duchess of Argyll at my lady Derby's last night. She tells me that Jimmy is in the Colonies, but that she has failed to obtain a pardon for him. This is distressing news and she seemed vastly put about. If you have an opportunity for private conversation with Sir William Howe, please to mention the matter to him.

Gretta and Juliet had been walking in the ruined part of the town, looking at the pitiful houses, the charred walls standing like shells of lost hopes, or lying in débris like a weight of broken loyalties. It was a sad sight —a horrible one when an old man standing by, on the watch for pennies, pointed out a gate on which he said one of the incendiaries had been hung, head downwards, all night, and had his throat cut in the morning.

"Aye, but 'tis nothing to what the rebels

did. Did ye hear of the young gal they tarred and feathered and rode on a rail, then ——" but Juliet and Gretta had hurried away without heeding his whining request for alms.

It was then that Lady Eastlake's letter was delivered by a servant of General Howe's.

"It is evident that England is three thousand miles away," Juliet remarked, smiling. "And yet, I wonder if it is so far, after all. A great dinner party is being given to His Excellency at the de Lancy place tonight, and mother has made me promise I would go, so come and help me make myself splendid, Gretta dear."

Early in November events began to move. Everyone knew that a great battle was pending. "The Highlanders will be in it," the Captain told them. "Jamsie says it will finish the war. And, Gretta, I believe we have news of Jeanie. She appears to have made her way back to Cambridge and to be employed there in the household of a loyalist family. But we shall have her, I think, when

the next batch of prisoners is exchanged. Campbell is being exchanged, too."

This was the best of news. It helped Gretta to forget for a moment that her father was gone out to see the fleet in the North River,

The 15th of November came, and the challenge to Fort Washington. The girls had gone out to see the fleet in the North River, but at the first sound of gunfire they went home, and worked in silence. All day long on the 16th the distant sounds of the battle reached them, and when quiet came again it deepened the suspense that hung over the house.

While they waited so, a cabriolet drove to the door, and out of it stepped a woman, who ran across the pavement and burst into the narrow hall.

"Where is she? Mistress Gretta, my moppet, here's your Jeanie, come to tend ye once mair."

Gretta flew to the summons and threw her arms around Jeanie's broad waist. The si-

lence, after gunfire, did not seem so dreadful with Jeanie there.

"Let me look at ye then." Jeanie pushed her charge away and scrutinized her from head to foot. " 'Tis grown ye have," she assured her, proudly, "and there's a look in your een that wasna theer before," she added, shrewdly. " 'Tis the little woman ye are getting to be. And tell Jeanie all about it, the noo."

Juliet and Cousin Bernicia welcomed Jeanie kindly, and an hour passed in recounting adventures and comparing experiences. After Gretta's escape Jeanie had appeased the party of soldiers by cooking them such a meal as they had not enjoyed for two years of campaigning. When the wounded soldier had been brought in she had attended him, scolding him soundly for his behavior and making him comfortable meanwhile. Realizing that Gretta was with Denis and no doubt at sea already, she had returned to Cambridge and gone at once to the house of

the Presbyterian clergyman, to whom she had told her story. He had found work for her, and through officers in charge of the prisoners' camp she had managed to get word to Captain Cameron, and her exchange had been arranged.

Before night they knew that Fort Washington had been stormed and taken, together with hundreds of prisoners, guns, and Colonel Macaw, the commander. The war was over, people said. The Continental army was dwindling; the officers were discouraged; Washington himself had written in a dispatch to Congress, "The dissolution of our army is fast approaching."

But that was a time when bad news too often followed closely on good. While the ladies still discussed details of the victory and Gretta's heart beat high in thinking of her father's part in it, Juliet called her from the room.

"I have had this," she whispered, handing Gretta a folded piece of paper. "What shall I do!"

Gretta read:

Your brother, Amory Lathrop, is wounded at the point of death at Peter Sylvester's farm on the road to New Rochelle. He asks for you.

"Oh," cried Gretta, "we must go, Juliet. We must go now!"

CHAPTER XX

Mr. Jimmy to the Rescue

GO THEY must, but how?

The two girls faced each other in perplexity. Cousin Bernicia must not be told. She would never permit them to take the risk. They had no carriage of their own, nor did they know the roads, nor whether they would be able to pass the sentinels.

While they stood in silent consternation, counting their difficulties, Uncle Bob, the negro servant, shambled into the room.

"The major he want to see Miss Juliet. He done say he not keep her two minutes." He turned cheerfully to the invisible visitor and called out: "Come 'long, Major Harding, sa'. You-all come right this way. Miss Juliet she say walk right in." Uncle Bob's heart had been won long ago by the hand-

some major, who was genial in his manner and lavish with his tips.

The girls tried to hide their discomfiture as they curtsied in response to the visitor's bow.

"I would not have intruded," he began "but I have good news for Miss Gretta. Her father is safe and has distinguished himself in action. I thought that any messenger would be welcome who brought such news." His eyes, seeking Juliet's, seemed to add, "Even I!"

Gretta felt sorry for him and thanked him warmly.

"It is my dearest wish to serve any of this household," he replied, still watching Juliet.

It was then that the idea came to Gretta. Major Harding seemed able to do anything he wanted. Why should he not help them? Without stopping to think, she spoke:

"Oh, Major Harding, will you help us get to Amory? There's no one else to ask and Cousin Bernicia must not know—and

—and—Gretta choked a moment before she finished, "he's dying ——"

The major turned to Juliet, who silently handed him the letter. When he looked up, he was the officer rather than the man, his face strong and commanding, his eyes thoughtful.

"If you will wait for half an hour I will be back. Prepare yourselves for a cold journey," he said, and, bowing, left them.

"Oh, why did you?" Juliet exclaimed.

"Because of Amory," Gretta replied.

"Yes, because of Amory!" Juliet twisted her fingers together. "Yet I would not be in that man's debt!"

They dressed themselves hastily in their warmest garments, took cloaks and muffs from the clothes press, dreading the sharp eyes of Jeanie or Cousin Bernicia. But no one intercepted them and half an hour later the major led them to the corner of Nassau Street, where a chaise and spirited horse waited. Another horse, held by a private soldier, stood there, too.

"I am riding with you as far as King's Bridge," the major explained. "The road is full of the riffraff a battle leaves behind. I have your passes, but you will be safer under my escort."

Juliet protested: "Indeed we are not afraid. We cannot think of taking your time in this way. Pray, sir, to let us proceed. The postilion is protection enough."

The major laughed, and with some reason, for the postilion was ancient, deaf, and frightened.

"Pray, sir, leave us. You have done enough!" Juliet insisted.

"Nay, but that I cannot do," the major quietly answered.

For a moment it seemed that Juliet would refuse to go, but Gretta laid a hand on hers and looked into her eyes. The older girl shrank into the corner of the chaise, making a sign to the postilion, who cracked his whip, and the little cavalcade started northward, up Broadway.

They made quick time up the Blooming-

dale Road. Soon they were in open country and the imposing reaches of the North River were on their left. The cultivated estates of gentlemen became less frequent, and the fields and woods of Haarlem were about them. They came on evidences of the late battles here—fences torn up, gates off their hinges, a trench roughly dug, an abandoned gun, the cap of a British private. Once when the road ran through a wood they saw something glitter among the trees. It was the bayonet of a soldier who had crept there out of the way to die.

Major Harding talked to Gretta, explaining the battle, pointing out the places where the fight had been hottest, and telling her anecdotes which whiled away the time. Gretta had almost forgotten her dislike of him, but Juliet remained silent and withdrawn, as if she resented his presence.

They were stopped and had to produce their pass more than once before they reached King's Bridge, the bloodstained heights of Fort Washington behind them on the left.

When they had crossed to the mainland it was almost four o'clock. The postilion seemed anxious to reach shelter before dark. The November air was already biting with the frost which would strike like steel at the fall of night. Already the light was tinged with shade. When the darkness came on, it would envelop them with a rush, quite different from the English twilight, hesitating into night so gently one could scarcely tell them apart. There were many plunges into deep woods, where the diminished daylight was further obscured by brown leaves still clinging to the trees.

It was in one of these woods that Major Harding changed his position, riding on Juliet's side of the chaise and talking to her as they went along, forced to walk by the unevenness of the road. Juliet drew toward Gretta uneasily, and answered the major in monosyllables. Once she cried out, "Sir, I pray you to leave us!" But the major only laughed. Again Juliet said, bravely, "Sir, it

is unfair of you to take this opportunity to make advances you know to be unwelcome."

Gretta heard his reply, "Surely what I say any man may say to a lady. I ask you to be my wife. I beg you."

Gretta could feel Juliet shiver, but she replied with dignity:

"Sir, I was betrothed to an officer in the rebel army. He was killed at Gowanus Creek. I can never marry you."

Then Major Harding said a hateful thing:

"All rebels are better dead. I was at Gowanus Creek, and I live. Juliet, you shall marry me."

Juliet trembled with anger.

"You are odious!" she cried. "If you have any regard for my feelings, leave me. I hate you!"

Gretta was frightened now and her old dislike for the major was coming back. His face wore that cruel smile which she had seen before. He was enjoying Juliet's misery and anger, she believed, just as he had en-

joyed frightening Denis and herself on that awful morning. He liked to frighten and torment people. She knew it, and the wood was dark and ominous and she could not see its end.

Just at that moment a man stepped out into the road and seized the head of their horse. He was followed by others who stood in the protection of the trees but showed the muzzles of their flintlocks. The leader appeared to be a tall man in the gray cloak of a grenadier, and he spoke:

"Your pass, if you please, ladies."

Major Harding rode up to him.

"What does this mean?" he demanded. "We are beyond the lines."

"We are here to prevent the passage of spies to and from the rebel army. Your pass, please. You are outnumbered, sir, and had better comply with my request."

The major tacitly admitted the truth of their statement by producing the pass.

"This does not mention either escort or

driver," the man asserted. "The ladies must turn back."

"But we can't!" cried Gretta. "We are going to a friend who is wounded. We must go on!"

The major eyed the men coldly.

"How much do you want?" he asked.

The leader consulted with his party in whispers.

"You do us an injustice," he said, "but if the ladies can leave their valuables with us as a guaranty that they will return this way ——"

Gretta's hand flew to her throat where her mother's pearls rested. She saw the man's eyes follow her act.

"I can't give you these. They were my mother's!" she cried.

"Can't?" he moved toward the chaise. Major Harding urged his horse forward to interfere.

What would have happened she never knew, for at that moment a whistle sounded and out of the woods rode a man, something

familiar in his pose reassuring Gretta before she saw his face. Even in the dusk she knew him when he turned to her. It was Mr. Jimmy.

The hood of her cloak concealed her face and he did not recognize her.

"What's this?" he demanded. "Bullying women? You didn't expect me back so soon, did you? I've a mind to horsewhip the pack of ye. 'Tis enough to make a man leave the road—the sneak-thief tricks of men like you! Men, did I say! Pah! Curs!" He rode to the side of the carriage.

"I regret, madam ——" He doffed his hat, and then Gretta leaned forward and cried, "Mr. Jimmy!"

"'Tis my little rescuer!" he exclaimed. "Bless me, but this happens pleasantly!"

"Aye, pleasantly for you, but not for us," Major Harding angrily interrupted. "If they are your followers, look to yourself, fellow. Such things go not unpunished when practiced upon an officer of the King. Begone

with your pack of bandits, and allow me to escort these ladies to their destination."

Mr. Jimmy drew back haughtily. "These are not my followers. 'Tis true that they serve my purpose now and then and that I have some slight control over them, as you see. I am not a bandit, sir, but an honest trader in difficult times." He laughed. "Mistress Gretta, your servant."

He would have turned his horse and ridden away, for Gretta was bewildered and helpless, but Juliet cried out: "No—no—Mr. Jimmy! Come back!"

He turned, startled at being called by name in the voice of a stranger.

"Please come back!" Juliet leaned forward. There was enough light left to show her lovely face, and her dark eyes, bright with fear. "Please," she pleaded, "take me to Peter Sylvester's farm, where my brother lies wounded. This *gentleman*"—her emphasis on the word gave it a double meaning—"has pressing duties in New York and I would not wish to detain him further."

Mr. Jimmy came back, looking from Gretta's face to Juliet's, where his gaze remained.

Then Major Harding showed his character. Gretta had never seen a man convulsed with rage, and the sight terrified her. He rode at Mr. Jimmy, his sword drawn, and in a voice thick with passion he ordered: "Get off, you blackguard! Get out of my sight or I'll run you through!"

"Nay, nay," laughed Mr. Jimmy, avoiding him deftly. "Not before ladies, my friend. You forget yourself."

Gretta spoke at last.

"Oh, Mr. Jimmy, do take care of us!" she begged. "Major Harding frightens us. Please don't go away."

Two of the rough men who had stopped them were holding the major's frightened horse. It was too dark to see his face now, but they could hear him breathing in sobs of rage.

"If it is indeed your wish, madam," Mr. Jimmy spoke to Juliet, "I will conduct you

to the farm of Peter Sylvester. If these men will detain the gentleman for an hour he can then return to his duties in New York without further delay. Is that your wish?"

"Thank you, sir," Juliet replied. "It is."

They signaled the postilion to drive on, and the party of cowboys gave them a cheer as the chaise started up, Mr. Jimmy riding at its side.

Soon they drove out of the woods into the open road, and as they went along the stars began to shine in the heavens and fear and anger were left far behind.

CHAPTER XXI

"And One Ye'll Desert—"

Once Peter Sylvester's farm had been famous for its comfort, cleanliness, and good cheer, but it had suffered in all three respects from the attention of the armies. The rebels had taken Dame Sylvester's bed-quilts, so carefully stitched during the happier winter evenings of the past, and greased their flintlocks in the living-room, leaving stains on the polished floor. The Hessians had torn Dutch tiles from the fireplace and used them as plates, and had tethered their horses on the carefully tended green before the door, and the British had drunk all the store of mulled wine, and broken the delft bowls from which they had imbibed it. Both armies had stolen horses, cattle, and fowls. Dame Sylvester's best-laying leghorn

had been killed for soup for a rebel general, and Peter's prize breeding-sow had been slaughtered and eaten in one meal by a company of Germans.

Worst of all, the peace which had enveloped the prosperous homestead was shattered, and the kindliness and trustfulness gone. It was a gloomy and suspicious man who opened the door to Juliet and Gretta on that November night, and listened to their story.

"Think you I am making my house a hospital for those that have plundered and ruined me?" he grumbled. "I ask to be let alone with what remains to me, but I ask in vain."

"Oh," cried Gretta, "but Amory is here, is he not?"

She had stepped forward into the light now and Peter could see her face.

"Why, 'tis a little maid!" he ejaculated in surprise. "Mother, come here." He held the door open more widely, and beckoned the two within. Dame Sylvester hurried for-

ward and, seeing Gretta, smiled with some of her old heartiness.

"Come in, my dear," she invited. "Whoever you are, or whatever side you take, you shall be warmed and fed. We can still do that for a child. Yes, come to the fire, and you, too." She turned to Juliet while Peter shambled out to attend to the driver and his horse.

But Juliet turned back to listen for the sound of galloping feet. Mr. Jimmy had waited until they were safe within the farmhouse before he rode away into the night.

"But Amory—may we go to him?" asked Gretta.

"Nay, but ye must be warmed and fed, first," Dame Sylvester decreed. "Ye will do him no good with your teeth chattering and your hands like ice. Come to the fire. Now sit ye there while I bring ye a drink, and tell your story if ye like while ye wait. The lad is ill to death, but he will not die tonight, nor tomorrow, for he is a splendid lad and is fighting for his life."

Juliet told her a little of their adventure while they were warmed and fed, and then the two girls went up to the room where Amory lay tossing deliriously on a great bed. Juliet sat down beside him, and in a moment Dame Sylvester drew Gretta away.

"Ye are too young for such things. I will make you a bed by the fire, poor child, and you must sleep, for though the world is full of grief and sorrow, I would not see dark shadows under young eyes, if I could drive them away."

She talked to Gretta as she busied herself making a bed on the old settle by the fire.

"We are loyalists," she said. "Why not? We were happy before the war. The tax on tea? A trifle. Did not the Rev. Seabury say a bushel of flaxseed every three years would pay it? Yes, we are loyalists though we have been persecuted for it by our neighbors and treated all the worse because of it by the soldiers of the King. But we are human—and that is why, when that lad crawled to our

door, bleeding and dying, we took him in in spite of his rebel blue coat."

Peter Sylvester walked into the kitchen as she said this, and looking at his wife with stolid meaning he said:

"That horse it is a good one! He would go another ten miles tonight and back again. I have hidden him in the old meat house. He would not be safe should a company of soldiers pass this way. We have no horses left," he explained to Gretta. "Even had we money to buy one, 'twould be no use to us. He would be stolen the next day, or the next."

"A horse then?"

Dame Sylvester rose and went quietly out of the room. When she came back she beckoned to her husband and they held a whispered colloquy at the door. When it was over she said to Gretta: "Listen to me, child. The lad will die if we cannot get help. At first we could not move, as the troops were all about us, but now we think it might be possible for a man on a good horse to get through

to a surgeon we know near New Rochelle. He would come and say nothing afterward, for he is a friend. We are good loyalists, but we are human, and the boy is a beautiful lad and I have come to love him. I could not see him die. But we must have a horse. Yours will be fed and rested in an hour. Will you let my husband ride him to New Rochelle to get the doctor?"

"Oh yes, yes! Take the horse!" Gretta cried.

Old Peter shambled out to see that the food was sufficient for the task expected of the mount, and when he came back he told Gretta stories of the war. Some were pitiful, some horrible, and some only dreary and sad. A few glowed with heroism and unselfish patriotism, but many were black with greed and cruelty. Thinking of Amory, she fell into a fitful sleep, pictures of war in the fire and dreams of war in her sleep mingling. She dreamed of drums, which merged into a great knocking at the door, and she woke to hear old Peter shambling to open to a soldier

who strode in and shouted in a voice she knew:

"Are they here? Are they safe? The two girls—Mistress Gretta Cameron and her friend? Tell me, man, before I shake it out of you."

Gretta jumped from her bed.

"Denis!" she cried. "What are you doing here?"

He fairly flung himself upon her.

"Thank God!" was all he said for a moment, then he sank down, shivering, beside the fire. "I thought you might be killed!" He hid his face in his hands. "Oh, Gretta!"

Then his story came out. He had been sent as a dispatch-rider into New Jersey and had heard on his way home, through Major Harding's servant, of the girls' expedition to find Amory. At the same time he had heard of the band of cowboys in the wood. They had murdered a man two days before. He had crossed the river, ferried over with his horse on a barge, hoping to intercept the girls in time, but had been too late. He had been

stopped by the same band, robbed of his horse and papers, and released.

"But did you not know Major Harding was with us?"

Denis raised a haggard face. "Gretta, he is a devil!" he said. "I've found him out. That he was with you frightened me more than anything. I have seen, and I know. His servant has told me. He orders his men flogged and watches the flogging. He likes it. I'm afraid of him! 'Twas he sent you word of Amory, that he might gain power over Mistress Juliet."

Gretta cried: "You were carrying dispatches. You have lost them?"

"Yes, but if I had a horse it would not be so bad. I have news of an ambush near Princetown waiting reinforcements going up tomorrow. I must get back. Gretta, I must take your horse. There are lives at stake."

Peter Sylvester spoke. "Aye, ye'd be in trouble, I fear, young mister, if serious mischief came of this night's work."

Denis stood in the firelight, a kind of

awkward dignity making him soldierly in spite of himself.

"I must manage to get the message through."

"And ye came out of your way and got yourself into this, for the sake of the little maid?" Peter Sylvester said, quietly. Then he turned to Gretta.

" 'Tis a choice, my dear," he told her, "the life of one rebel or perhaps the lives of many of the King's men. And there's this lad, too, who's risked his honor for you, though ye were safe, after all. Which shall have the horse?"

Gretta covered her eyes with her hands. She saw in that blackness the company of soldiers swinging along a darkening road. Perhaps they would be Highland soldiers, her father riding by their side. There would be a wood, perhaps, and the kilted band would enter it, maybe singing a song of home —"Lochaber no more—Lochaber no more." She heard the refrain. Shots would ring out from behind trees and find their targets with

cruel accuracy of bullets fired from the flintlocks of woodland warriors. She saw the tall Highlanders reel and fall, one by one, saw her father ——

"Oh, Denis, take my horse and go!" she cried. "Go quickly! Go now!"

"You're safe, Gretta?" he asked. "We're sure you're safe? Juliet is here? You'll wait here until we can send an escort? You'll promise?"

"Yes, yes, yes, only go!" she cried, for now she saw another picture—Amory's tormented, tossing figure and his bright, unseeing eyes. He would die, and she would have chosen that he should die. All her life she would have that to remember. She struggled with herself in the blackness made by her two hands. But Amory's eyes opened and looked at her in that blackness, and the pain and pleading there had their way.

"Denis!" she cried, starting to her feet. "Denis! No—no—I ——"

The room was empty.

She flew, winged by terror, to the door and flung it open.

The sound of horse's hooves, galloping on the frost-bound road, rang back to her for the second time that night.

CHAPTER XXII

The Blue Bowknot

On a gay winter's morning Gretta woke to the sound of music. Drums were beating, bugles blowing, marching feet throbbed along the city streets, for the army was on the move at last to join Cornwallis in his chase of the rebels, and all New York was eager to wave farewell to officers and men. The war would be over soon, it was felt, now that Howe was on the march.

Today Denis was to receive one thousand lashes.

It was by accident that Gretta knew of the punishment to be inflicted on him for his error.

Her father had come for her at Peter Sylvester's farm and had taken her back with him by boat, while Juliet remained with

her brother. He had told her that Denis was under arrest, but a week later, on the day that Juliet returned to New York with better news of Amory, Gretta, hidden in the window seat, heard her exclaim: "A thousand lashes! 'Tis murder!"

"Worse than death to the lad, I fear. Major Harding thought the example necessary. We cannot judge."

"Major Harding is cruel and evil, mother. I must tell you. Amory's life has been saved, we hope. The surgeon has moved him to his own house. It was Gretta's friend, Mr. Jimmy, who saved him by bringing the surgeon. I told him about Denis and the papers. He will try to recover them."

Cousin Bernicia did not speak.

And Gretta, sick and faint with the news, had pretended to be asleep when they found her. Now she lay still for a moment as the memory stabbed her through and through.

"But he can't bear it!" she said aloud to the empty room. "Some one must help me—some one must."

A derisive cheer came from the street outside, as if some demon of war had heard her and was pleased with his triumph of cruelty.

"Denis wasn't made for war," she protested. "Everything hurts him. He will die. I know he will!"

There was one thing she could do. She could be with him. No one should stop her. Floggings were held in public and she knew where to go. There was a place near the Whitehall steps. Uncle Bob, the colored servant, had told her about it. She would go there.

But before she had finished her dressing, or tied back her hair as etiquette demanded, Juliet came into the room hurriedly and said, "Gretta, is this yours?"

She held out a faded knot of blue ribbon. Gretta stared at it, and then took it into her hand.

"A messenger came and left this and said to tell you to be on Broadway by Saint Paul's Church at twelve. What does it mean?"

"It is my knot of ribbon!" Gretta exclaimed, "and the gypsy said I was to trust the one who returned it. Oh, Juliet, what shall I do?"

"Where were you going?" asked Juliet, seeing the cloak which Gretta had taken down from the peg over the door.

Gretta hesitated; then her face told the truth, for Juliet swept an arm around her. "Oh, poor Gretta!" she exclaimed.

But Gretta had a thought that made her lift her head.

"Juliet," she cried, "I believe this may mean help. It must be Mr. Jimmy. I'll go as he says. Will you come with me?"

"Of course I will!" answered the other. "Come, we must be quick." Juliet's eyes were bright.

They hurried down the stairs, wrapped against the frost, each carrying a muff of beaver fur. No one saw them go, and soon they were among others all moving toward Broadway, up which the troops would march

to the ferry. New York was holiday-making on this fine winter morning.

They went by Smith Street and William Street to avoid the crowds, and came into Broadway just south of Saint Paul's Church. They were in time to get good places, between a stout woman in a striped skirt and enormous apron, and a gentleman in brown cloth who kept back a crowd of small boys by swinging his stick in an irate manner. The people were muffled and mittened, and here and there ear caps were already in view, while poorer persons resorted to all sorts of devices to keep their fingers from being nipped and their noses bitten. As the sun rose higher the frost yielded to its warmth and jokes and badinage began to replace the beatings of arms against chests and stampings of feet. Yet suspicion was here, too, and good humor was broken every now and again by a snarl of hatred. The gentleman in brown drifted into a conversation with a little anxious-looking man in a faded green suit worn thin, and a great-coat many sizes too large

They Were in Time to Get Good Places

for him. The girls heard what they said. The little man had been a printer, but because he printed both sides of the question he had been persecuted by the Yankees and driven from his home. His press had been destroyed, his family scattered, and now he had come back to find his house in ruins. He had narrowly escaped being ridden on a rail, and was terrified for fear New York would be deserted by the British when the war ended.

Gretta and Juliet stood silent in the shadow of the church, waiting for what they knew not.

And now the crowd began to grow impatient. Quarrels had broken out here and there, romping between men and maids became boisterous. The girls were pushed back and elbowed this way and that. If the sound of distant music had not diverted the people, there might have been trouble, but at that signal there was a surging forward and the two were pressed almost into the path of the incoming regiments.

A party of cavalry came first. "Back!

back!" they cried, enforcing their commands by charging the crowd right and left.

Then came a band of grenadiers, followed by an infantry regiment in all their bravery of red coat, buskin, white breeches, and shining accouterments.

Fraser's Highlanders followed, kilted and bonneted, their broadswords replaced by muskets and bayonets. The tune of "The British Grenadiers" died away and the pipes began a Jacobite air, their great noisy music finding its home in the open as it never can between four walls.

Then came the officers and a regiment of the line, and then the personal staff of His Excellency Sir William Howe, his banner floating gayly as the horse of the standard-bearer sidled and pranced in the keen air.

But as they came forward, the general acknowledging the cheers of the crowd by salutes to right and left, there was a struggle in the line of spectators. Curses and laughter mingled. Then some one called out: "Dis-

patches! Important dispatches for His Excellency. Make way! Make way!"

Gretta, who had been shivering with something more fearful than the cold, felt a thrill of sudden hope. She and Juliet grasped hands and peered between the intervening heads to see a man ride into the roadway and make his way to the side of the general. He rode a thoroughbred flaked with foam, and the man's own garments showed signs of hard riding. They could not see his face, but Gretta knew him by the way he sat his horse, and his gloved hands on the reins. It was Mr. Jimmy.

Somehow they twisted and thrust themselves nearer and nearer to the group of officers and the dark-coated rider, who handed a bundle of papers to the aide, who gave them to the commander-in-chief.

Sir William Howe opened and examined them. The girls could see his face under its three-cornered hat, but it was the face of a soldier and showed neither surprise nor pleasure. He examined the documents with some

care, while the crowd diverted itself with horseplay and chatter. Gretta and Juliet alone hung on the turn of the moment. At last there was a gesture and a crisp word. "Come here," directed His Excellency.

Mr. Jimmy rode forward.

"These are valuable dispatches. They contain useful information. You are not a soldier." His eye ran over Mr. Jimmy's dress. "What can I do for you?"

"Oh," whispered Gretta, "he must ask for his pardon, Juliet. He will get it. I know he will."

They listened. Mr. Jimmy's voice sounded warm in the frosty air.

"Pardon, Your Excellency, for a lad named Denis Bartholomew, who was robbed of these papers on the King's Bridge road a fortnight ago. He is a private in the Royal Americans, I believe."

Sir William Howe turned to his aide. "See that this pardon is granted at once," he ordered.

But here an interruption took place. An-

other man rode to the side of His Excellency, saluting smartly, his uniform, with silver lace, showing gayly by the side of Mr. Jimmy's sober coat.

"Forgive me, sir. This man should be put under arrest. He is a leader of a band of cowboys who have done mischief to His Majesty's cause in Westchester County."

There was a momentary silence. Even those too far away to hear his words knew that something strange and dramatic was taking place. An officer whispered a word in the general's ear.

"You are Major Harding of the Sixtieth Royal American?"

The major saluted.

"I have had disturbing reports of you this morning—severity in infliction of punishment. It is a misdemeanor I abominate. You will keep to your quarters till further notice. As for this man, he has done us a service. I do not choose that he should suffer for it. Forward."

Mr. Jimmy reined back his horse. The

crowd surged forward. The two girls were jostled aside, but not until they had seen a corporal detached from the ranks and sent back to New York with a message from His Excellency. Denis was pardoned and their enemy discomfited.

But Mr. Jimmy?

They saw him search the crowd with his blue eyes. He did not see Gretta, but for one moment his glance met Juliet's as she looked up at him. Then he wheeled his horse about and made off at a careless canter, up the lane toward the river and out of sight.

The crowd was dispersing now, and the town resuming its usual appearance, except that few soldiers remained in streets that had been full of them.

It was a long day of waiting in the little house in Wall Street, but late that evening a young private asked to see Mistress Lathrop. She called him into the parlor.

"You are friends of Private Bartholomew's?" he asked, and when they assented he continued: "I am asked to tell you that

he escaped from the prisoners' ship last night. No one knows how it happened, but he left some papers addressed to Mistress Gretta Cameron. The Captain ordered me to deliver them."

Gretta put out her hand and received the sheaf of manuscript, tears starting to her eyes. The young soldier saluted and withdrew.

There was a letter from Denis, written in his careful, flowing hand. It read.

MOST HONORED FRIEND:

It will not surprise you to hear that I cannot endure the punishment to which I am condemned. I know now that I will never make a soldier, and an opportunity to escape occurs which I dare not refuse. I am going into the wilderness, and you may never hear of me again, but I shall always remember you.

This is going to be a great country some day and I shall see it grow and strengthen. I should like to have a hand in it. I have no family or friends to leave behind me, and lest you should think of me with regret I write this letter. I have seen what war is and it seems to me cruel and useless. I am taking nothing from my country in escaping, for I should not live through the ordeal

of tomorrow. You will know that I am going forth on an adventure which fires my enthusiasm. Some day, perhaps, I will write to you again. In the meantime these are my verses. Please take them as a sign of friendship, from one you may never see again.

DENIS BARTHOLOMEW.

How like Denis to run such risk when he need only have waited twelve hours for release. Gretta turned over the verses, her eyes blinded with tears. She wiped them away and read a line here and there. They were like Denis himself, gay, fanciful, melancholy, and strange, but they were never awkward or comic as he so often was.

She and Juliet talked late that night.

"I shall never forget today," Juliet said. "Mr. Jimmy never asked for himself, Gretta!"

"I wish he had," Gretta answered, wistfully.

"I don't," Juliet whispered.

The winter days came on, and with them the amazing news of Washington's escape

across the Delaware and the halting of the British at Trenton. Before Christmas Sir William Howe and his staff were back in New York to celebrate the season, and the town was gay once more. Cornwallis was here, too, an energetic and gallant figure. Juliet was bidden to balls and routs and, instead of evading such invitations, seemed to welcome them, especially whenever they offered a chance of meeting the commanding officers. She was so beautiful at this time that Gretta loved to watch her. Young officers, welcomed graciously by Cousin Bernicia, filled the parlors of the Wall Street house, but Major Harding was not among them. They were kind to Gretta, too, bringing her sweets and books and anything they thought would please her. Her father was in camp with his men, but he came to see her sometimes, and it seemed that life would always go on in the same way. She was doing lessons with a kindly clergyman, and making progress in all the household arts under Cousin Bernicia's tuition.

Christmas came and went in a round of merriment. As a concession to the season, Gretta was allowed to go to a great dinner. The table was gay with bonbons, candles, silver, and fine glass. Wine glowed and sparkled in the glasses of gentlemen whose red coats and gold braid glowed against the paneling of the old walls. The ladies wore their best, too, their hair dressed high and powdered, their gowns of the latest French brocades, in stripes of blue or wine color or pink or yellow or green, with petticoats ruched, quilted or embroidered, of a harmonious shade.

Sir William Howe himself was there, and toasts were proposed and drunk and speeches were made, and all was hopefulness and good cheer. The rebel army was being defeated by the harsh winter, by poverty and discouragement. The general was praised for his policy of not sacrificing British lives when the forces of nature were working for him.

"When the Colonies are at peace again, they'll yield with a better heart if we've shed

as little blood as possible," the general was quoted as saying.

But Gretta, sitting there in the midst of the merriment, thought of Amory. There would be no good cheer for him tonight. Did he rest under a roof with a fire to warm him, or was he in a tent, the snow piled five feet high against the canvas? She shivered as she listened to the stories of the destitution of the soldiers. "Hardly a whole coat among them, much less a blanket, and food scarce, and horses dying. Men deserting in bigger numbers every day. They can do nothing. We've only to wait."

And at that moment, while a burst of laughter and a tinkling of glass against glass drowned the voice of the speaker, barges and boats were gathering among floating ice on the Delaware River. Silent men in tattered garments were there, and another man, of infinite patience, watched the embarkation proceed. On the opposite bank the Hessians drank and sang their songs of home, but there were no songs for the Continentals that

night. Those came later—much later, indeed, but they came at last.

It was on that night that Juliet's chance came, and it came through the charming Major André, who, it was said, had come to America owing to a disappointment in love, and was a general favorite with all. He had danced a minuet, a reel, and country dance with Juliet, and now they were doing a Sir Roger de Coverly, which Gretta was dancing, too. He was bending close to Juliet as they danced down the center, and Gretta heard him say, "Certainly I will." It was after this that she saw Juliet led to Sir William Howe and enter into conversation with him. Gretta drew near and heard:

"Carstairs? Jimmy Carstairs? Bless me if I have not some inquiry about him! Why, yes, his father has died and he is wanted at home. Why, yes, I remember that story, an old affair. A duel. Yes, yes. I'll take up the matter at once. A packet sails next week with dispatches. And now, my dear, may I have the honor of leading you out in this dance?"

So Juliet danced, and danced gayly, with the commander-in-chief, and it was not until the evening was over and their coach at the door that Major André hurried down the hall, distress in his eyes.

"Mistress Lathrop," he addressed Cousin Bernicia, "may I ride with you? I have a message which I could deliver by the way."

Cousin Bernicia stiffened within her stiff brocades.

"Tell me now, sir," she ordered. "My son?"

"You have a son in the rebel army, madam?"

"No rebel is a son of mine, sir," she replied, but her voice faltered and her eyes asked a question.

"A rebel officer by the name of Lathrop is reported to have died as a result of wounds." The young man's eyes fell as he gave the message. "My friend asked me to give you the message."

As Gretta reached for the support of the wall behind her, a voice rang in her ears,

"And when ye've had such news as ye cannot live and bear ye'll know it is not true, for ye are of the favored ones."

"I don't believe it," she cried out as the music of a new dance sprang from the violin strings and set feet tapping on the ballroom floor.

CHAPTER XXIII

Apple Blossoms

On a day in early spring, when the orchards were white and pink with apple blossom, hiding the shabbiness and ruin left by the trail of war over the pleasant pastures of Westchester County, two girls, accompanied by a postilion, drove down the White Plains road to the Torch and Hammer Inn.

It had been a festive week, for Jamsie and Jeanie had been married the day before in the Presbyterian Church in Wall Street, and Captain Cameron, now major, had been present, bringing the news that he was to be invalided home for six months' leave, and was taking Gretta with him. To Gretta's great joy, Juliet was going too, and there would be no separation this time, as their cabins were arranged on a packet bound for Ply-

mouth, to be accompanied by three frigates of the navy. Major Cameron was carrying dispatches of great importance from Sir William Howe to Lord George Germaine.

New York had taken the British reverses in New Jersey with calmness and optimism, but now that there was talk of the campaign being transferred to Pennsylvania, and British headquarters to Philadelphia, the loyalist families were uneasy.

Westchester was quiet enough to make their expedition safe for the two girls, equipped with passes as they were, and the drive was no more than an agreeable length, for they had moved to the country near Bloomingdale village for the summer.

They had brought with them a cold lunch, and had eaten it beside the road, recalling their adventures of the previous November. Juliet never seemed tired of talking about Mr. Jimmy.

The Torch and Hammer Inn, reached at midday, was a quaint spot, well away from the highroad and surrounded by apple trees.

They were met at the gate by Mr. Jimmy himself, who helped them to alight, while the landlady, delighted to see anything so young and pretty in these sad times, smiled upon the three and set the best of meat pies and great jugs of cider before them.

"We've brought you a surprise," Gretta announced, "and it was Juliet who ——"

But Juliet interrupted her:

"No, don't believe her. Gretta did everything."

"Why, Juliet how can you say so?" Gretta protested. "You know you asked Sir William Howe, yourself." But Juliet blushed so painfully that Gretta paused, though she could not understand the cause of her embarrassment. Mr. Jimmy was grave as he looked at Juliet, but there was a light like a smile in his blue eyes.

"In any case, you bewilder me, Mistress Gretta," he declared. "I obeyed your summons gladly, for it is always an honor to obey you and a pleasure beyond my deserts to look upon your face and Miss Juliet's. But now

I am here, perhaps you will explain the mystery."

Gretta drew from a large knitting-bag, borrowed for the special purpose, a formidable parchment, decorated with seals and tapes. She gave it to him with a triumphant gesture.

"It is your pardon, signed by the King himself. And we want you—Juliet wants you—to come home with us and join the army!"

Mr. Jimmy took the parchment, looking down on it with a doubtful smile. But his gallantry came to the rescue and he made a low bow to each of the girls.

"Nothing," he said, "gives me so much pleasure as owing my restoration to favor to two ladies whom I so highly revere as yourselves."

Juliet curtsied in response, and the little ceremony was over.

"And now," said Mr. Jimmy, "I have a surprise for you, Mistress Gretta. Will you

come with me? Mistress Juliet, will you wait?"

He led her through the inn out into another orchard, neglected now and unkempt, to a little hollow where a group of trees hung over a quietly flowing rivulet. "Some one is waiting here to see you," said Mr. Jimmy.

There, sitting on a bank, his hands full of violets, was Amory. He sprang up when he saw Gretta, and the violets were scattered at her feet.

"You—you ——" she stammered.

"Why, Gretta, what is the matter?" he asked.

If it had not been springtime it might have been harder to believe. But in May, when everything is born again, it is easier to accept one miracle more. Gretta put out her hands.

"We thought you were dead!" she answered. "Oh, Amory! You're sure you're not?"

He laughed gayly at that.

"Not quite!" he answered her. "Gretta, I'm hungry for news of everyone. I've man-

aged to get across the river and I go back tonight after dark. We're just over there at Peekskill. Mr. Jimmy managed to let me know you were coming. Sit down and talk to me. You promised to be my friend," he reminded her, wistfully, "whatever happened."

So she told him all she could of the long, dark winter—of his mother's grief, and how her heart was softened toward him at last; of Denis, from whom she had heard again and who was with a farmer in Tryon County. She had sent his poems home and they had been published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. She told of Major Harding's disgrace and disappearance and of her own approaching return to England.

"But you'll come back?" he asked. "Some day you will. Gretta, we're going to win this war. If you could see General Washington you'd know it. We shall be a country free from tyranny and favoritism; every man will be born the equal of his neighbor; each will

"You Promised to Be My Friend, Whatever Happened"

find his own level, unhampered by his father's ——"

"How can that be?" Gretta shook her head. "If you are brave, isn't it partly because your father was, and if you are clever, where did you get your brains but from your parents? I don't think all men will ever be born equal, Amory."

"Nay, but there will be no class prejudice, no titles to protect the cruel and stupid, no hereditary right to rule ——"

But the others were coming toward them. Juliet took Amory into her arms with a cry of joy. Mr. Jimmy stood smiling on them all.

"I heard what you were saying, Amory," he remarked, "and it comes in rather pertinently, for I've had other news from home. I've succeeded to one of those titles you despise, and I'd like to forget it. I've no wish to return to a huge barracks of a house. Its roof leaks, 'tis draughty and cold, and, they say, haunted. We've no talent for being on the winning side, as a family. Freedom and

a good horse under me is my idea of happiness, and I like this country. I like its bigness; the rivers are wide and the mountains high, the sun warms and the cold freezes. I like all that. But"—he heaved a sigh and stretched his arms above his head—"I'm going home. With this"—he held out the parchment recording his pardon—"I've no excuse to shirk. There are old people who will look from their cottage doors to see me come home and take my place there. There are fields to be reclaimed and trees to be planted and cut down; there are pictures of men and women looking down from the damp walls, and they are men and women who shouldered their share of responsibility for their bit of England and handed on to me a queer sort of feeling that I shall have to do the same. I'm going home, to the gray skies and the wet winds and the fox in the covert and the church bells ringing below my window on a Sunday morning. I'm going back, to wear broadcloth and grow stout and, who knows, sit as magistrate over some poor

devil of a poacher, or stand for Parliament and get whipped by the Tory! I'm going to be respectable, and I shan't like it, I'll swear, my lad. And 'tis these ladies who have brought it all about!" He laughed, waved the parchment, and bowed to Juliet and Gretta.

"Will you go back with us, Mr. Jimmy?" cried Gretta. "Oh, I wish you would! Juliet is coming, too, to pay us a visit in England."

"That," said Mr. Jimmy, quickly, "puts a new complexion on the matter, Miss Gretta."

Juliet blushed, one of her vivid blushes, and Mr. Jimmy watched the color rise and fall on her cheek.

"We must go," she said. "Good-by, dear Amory."

The boy kissed his sister in silence, and she turned away.

"Good-by, Gretta," he said.

As he stood there, trying not to look as if he minded the parting, Gretta saw that his shoes were roughly patched, that his coat sleeves were frayed and his face thin, as if

he had known what it was to be hungry and might know it again. She saw this and then could not see him at all for tears.

"Oh, Amory," she cried, "I hate war!"

"It has to be," he answered.

"I don't believe it!" she protested. "Why cannot countries be like the people in them? I do not understand. War would be fine if it were waged against something ugly and bad—something like sickness and wickedness and—and dirt. Oh, Amory, good-by. We shall be friends, won't we, always, whatever happens?"

She left him standing there, and ran toward Juliet and Mr. Jimmy, who were waiting for her under the blossom-laden trees.

THE END

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